

A HISTORY
OF THE
EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE

FROM THE FALL OF IRENE TO THE
ACCESSION OF BASIL I.

(A.D. 802-867)

BY

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CHAPTER XI

BULGARIA

§ 1. *The Bulgarian Kingdom*

THE hill-ridge of Shumla, which stretches from north-west to south-east, divides the plain of Aboba from the plain of Preslav, and these two plains are intimately associated with the early period of Bulgarian history. It must have been soon after the invaders established their dominion over Moesia, from the Danube to the Balkans, that they transferred their capital and the seat of their princes from a marshy fortress in the Dobrudzha to a more central place. Their choice fell upon Pliska. It is situated north-east of Shumla, in the plain of Aboba, and near the modern village of that name.¹ Travellers had long since recognized the site as an ancient settlement, but it was taken for granted that the antiquities which the ground evidently concealed were of Roman origin, and it has only recently been discovered by excavation that here were the great entrenched camp and the royal palace of the early khans of Bulgaria.

The camp or town formed a large irregular quadrilateral, and some idea of its size may be conveyed, if it is said that its greatest length from north to south was four miles, and that its width varied from two miles and a half to about one mile and three-quarters. It was enclosed by a fortification, consisting of a ditch outside a rampart of earth, the crown of which appears to have been surmounted by a wooden fence. Although early destruction and later cultivation have done

¹ This account of Pliska is based on the publication of the excavations of the Russian Archaeological Institute of

Constantinople, cited as *Aboba* (see Bibliography).

what they could to level and obliterate the work, the lines can be clearly traced, and it has been shown that the town could be entered by eleven gates. Near the centre of the enclosure was an inner stronghold, and within this again was the palace of the Khans. The stronghold, shaped like a trapezium, was surrounded by thick walls, which were demolished at an ancient date, and now present the appearance of a rampart about ten feet high. Four circular bastions protected the four angles, and two double rectangular bastions guarded each of the four gates, one of which pierced each of the four walls. The walls were further strengthened by eight other pentagonal bastions. The main entrance was on the eastern side.

Within this fortress stood a group of buildings, which is undoubtedly to be identified as the palatial residence of the Khans. The principal edifice, which may be distinguished as the Throne-palace, was curiously constructed. A large room in the basement, to which there seems to have been no entrance from without, except perhaps a narrow issue underneath a staircase, points to the fact that the ground-floor was only a substructure for an upper storey. This storey consisted of a prodomos or entrance-hall on the south side, to which the chief staircase ascended, and a hall of audience. The hall was nearly square, and was divided by rows of columns into three parts, resembling the nave and aisles of a church. The throne stood in a round apse, in the centre of the northern wall. Not far from this building stood a rectangular temple, which in the days of Krum and Omurtag was devoted to the heathen cult of the Bulgarians, but was converted, after the adoption of Christianity, into a church.

The fortress and the palace, which seem to have been built much about the same time, certainly belong to no later period than the first half of the ninth century. The architecture of the Throne-palace bears the impress of Byzantine influence, and has a certain resemblance to the Trikonchos of Theophilus, as well as to the Magnaura.¹ It was doubtless constructed by Greek masons. The columns may have been imported from Constantinople; it is recorded that Krum,

¹ It resembled the Triklinos of the Magnaura by its throne-apse and the rows of columns in the "nave"; it resembled the Trikonchos in being

an upper storey and in being entered through the prodomos, as the Trikonchos was entered through the Sigma, to which external stairs ascended.

when he attacked that city, carried off works of art from the suburban buildings.

The title of the rulers of Bulgaria was *khanas uvegé*, "sublime khan,"¹ but even while they were still heathen, they did not scruple to have themselves described sometimes in their official monuments as "rulers by the will of God."² Of the political constitution of the kingdom little can be ascertained. The social fabric of the ruling race was based on the clan system,³ and the head of each clan was perhaps known as a *župan*. From early ages the monarchy had been hereditary in the clan of Dulo, but in the middle of the eighth century, Kormisos, who belonged to another family, ascended the throne, and after his death Bulgaria was distracted for some years by struggles for the royal power. We may probably see in these events a revolt of the clans against the hereditary principle and an attempt to make the monarchy elective. There were two ranks of nobility, the boilads and the bagains,⁴ and among the boilads there were six or perhaps twelve who had a conspicuous position at the court. When a Bulgarian ambassador arrived at Constantinople, etiquette required that the foreign minister should make particular inquiry first for "the six

¹ *κάνας ὑβηγγῆ*, preceding the name (frequent in the inscriptions). *ὑβηγγῆ* has been satisfactorily equated (by Tomaschek) with the Cuman-Turk *öweghü* = "high, glorious"; cp. Marquart, *Streifzüge*, 495; *Chron.* 40.

² Omurtag in the Chatalar inscription (A.D. 821-822), *ἐκ θεοῦ ἀρχων*, *Aboba*, 545; and Malamir, *ὁ ἐκ θ. ἀ.*, *ib.* 230 (= *C.I.G.* 8691). The use of the title by Omurtag disproves Uspenski's conjecture (*ib.* 197-198) that the Roman government conferred it on Malamir because Christianity had spread in Bulgaria in his reign. Marquart's view is (*Chron.* 41-42) that the title was meant as a translation of the Turkish *Tängri-dä bolmyş qan*, "heaven-created khan." It was the regular style of the Christian princes, cp. Constantine, *Cer.* 681.

³ So among the Magyars (*ἔχει δὲ ἐκάστη γυνεὴ ἀρχοντα*, *Const. De adm. imp.* 174). Besides the clans of Dulo, Ukil, and Ugain, mentioned in the Regnal list, we have various *γυνεαί* recorded in ninth cent. inscriptions, e.g. *Κυριγῆρ*, *Κουβάρης* (*Aboba*, 190-

192). Okhsun, of the family of Kuri-ger, is described as *ὁ ζουπάν* (190); Okorses as *ὁ κοπάνος* (where *κ* seems to be an error for *ζ*, *ib.*); and in another inscription (No. 7, p. 192) in honour of some one *γυνεὺς Ἐρ. . . ἀρης*, I would supply at the beginning *ζουπαν*ος. As the title Zhupan was used by South Slavonic peoples for the head of a tribe, it is a reasonable conjecture that it designated a tribal prince among the Bulgarians. See Uspenski, *ib.* 199. The word is supposed to occur in the form *ζουπαν* in the early inscription of Marosh in Hungary, which is believed to relate to the Gepids (*ib.*).

⁴ Cp. *C.I.G.* 8691b, *καὶ τοὺς βοιλάδας καὶ βαγαίνους ἔδωκεν μεγάλη ξένια*. Cp. Uspenski, *Aboba*, 201-202. *Borlas*, in Mansi, xvi. 158, has been rightly corrected to *boelas* (*βοηλάς*, usual form in the inscriptions) by Marquart (*Chron.* 41). *Vagantius* or *vaganlius*, in the same passage, is doubtless *vaganlius* (*βαγάλιος*), cp. Uspenski, *op. cit.* 204. *βοηλάς* passed into Slavonic as *boliarin* (the Russian *boiar*).

great boilads," and then for the other boilads, "the inner and the outer."¹ There were thus three grades in this order. We do not know whether the high military offices of *tarkan* and *kaukhan*² were confined to the boilads. The khan himself had a following or retinue of his own men,³ which seems to have resembled the German *comitatus*. The kingdom was divided into ten administrative divisions, governed by officers whose title we know only under the equivalent of *count*.⁴

The Bulgarians used the Greek language for their official documents,⁵ and like the ancient Greeks recorded their public acts by inscriptions on stones. Mutilated texts of treaties and records of important events have been discovered. They are composed in colloquial and halting Greek, not in the diplomatic style of the chancery of Byzantium, and we may guess that they were written by Bulgarians or Slavs who had acquired a smattering of the Greek tongue. Among these monuments are several stones inscribed by the khans in memory of valued officers who died in their service. One of them, for instance, met his death in the waters of the Dnieper, another was drowned in the Theiss.⁶ This use of the Greek language for

¹ In Constantine, *Cer.* 681, we find the six great boilads (tenth cent.), but in *De adm. imp.* 154, we learn of the capture of "the twelve great boilads" by the Servians (ninth cent.). It seems plain that *inner* and *outer* simply mean a higher and lower grade. For we find exactly the same terms, *great*, *inner*, and *outer* applied to the three Bulgarias. There were the Great Bulgarians on the Danube, the Inner Bulgarians on the Sea of Azov, and the Outer Bulgarians on the Volga. See below, p. 410 sq.

² The *tapkânos* (inscriptions) was undoubtedly a military commander. We meet this Turkish title in Menander's account of an embassy of the Turkish Khan Dizabul to Justin II. (fr. 20). The ambassador's name was Tagma, ἄξιμα δὲ αὐτῷ Ταρχάν. See also *Cont. Th.* 413, καλουτερκάνος (*leg.* Καλὸν τερκάνος), and *Const. Cer.* 681, ὁ βουλίας ταρκάνος. See Uspenski, *op. cit.* 199-200; Marquart, *Chron.* 43-44. For the *κανχάνος* see inscriptions, *Aboba*, 220, 233, and Simeon (*Cont. Georg.* ed. Muralt, 819, ed. Bonn 893), ἄμα κανχάνω. Other dignities were βαγατορ or βογοτορ (inscriptions; also

Const. Porph. De adm. imp. 158₁₇, ἀλο-βογοτούρ, as Marquart corrects for ἀλογοβοτούρ), the Turkish bagatur, from which the Russian *bogatyr* (= hero) is derived; and ζουργου (*zerco*, in Mansi, xvi. 158; see Uspenski, *ib.* 204). κολαβρος (κοιλουβρος) seems to have been a title of rank, not a post or office; Tomaschek equates it with Turkish *qolaghuz*, a guide, and Marquart (*Chron.* 41) compares βουκολαβράς in Theoph. Simocatta, i. 8. 2, who explains it as μάγος or λευεύς.

³ θρεπτοὶ ἄνθρωποι, frequent in the inscriptions. See Uspenski's long discussion, *ib.* 204 sqq.

⁴ *Ann. Bert.*, sub a. 866 (p. 85), "intra decem comitatus." Silistria was the chief place of one of the counties: inscription, Simeon, *Izv. Kpl.* iii. 186, κόμης Δρίστρου. Cp. also Theophylactus, *Hist. mart.*, P. G., 126, 201, 213. See *Aboba*, 212.

⁵ Some mysterious epigraphic fragments have also been discovered, written, partly at least, in Greek letters, but not in the Greek tongue. They are very slight and little can be made of them. See *Aboba*, c. viii.

⁶ *Aboba*, 190-194.

their records is the most striking sign of the influence which was exercised on the Bulgarians by the civilization of Constantinople. We can trace this influence also in their buildings, and we know that they enlisted in their service Greek engineers, and learned the use of those military engines which the Greeks and Romans had invented for besieging towns. Notwithstanding the constant warfare in which they were engaged against the Empire, they looked to Constantinople much as the ancient Germans looked to Rome. Tervel had been created a Caesar by the gratitude of Justinian II., and two of his successors found an honourable refuge in the Imperial city when they were driven by rivals from their own kingdom. Tserig fled to the court of Leo IV. (A.D. 777), accepted baptism and the title of Patrician, and was honoured by the hand of an Imperial princess.¹ It might be expected that the Bulgarians would have found it convenient to adopt the Roman system of marking chronology by indictions or even to use the Roman era of the Creation of the world, and we actually find them employing both these methods of indicating time in their official records.² But they had also a chronological system of their own. They reckoned time by cycles of sixty lunar years, starting from the year A.D. 659, memorable in their history as that in which they had crossed the Danube and made their first permanent settlement in Moesia.³ For historical purposes, this system involved the same disadvantage as that of Indictions, though to a much smaller degree; for instance, when an event was dated by the year *shigor alem* or 48, it was necessary also to know to what cycle the year referred. But for practical purposes there was no inconvenience, and even in historical records little ambiguity would have been caused until the Bulgarian annals had been extended by the passage of time into a larger series. It is possible that the Bulgarian lunar years corresponded to the years of the Hijra, and if so, this would be a remarkable indication of Mohammadan influence, which there are other reasons for suspecting. We know that in the ninth century there must have been some Bulgarians who were acquainted with Arabic literature.⁴

¹ Krum's sister married a Greek deserter.

² See *Aboba*, 227 and 546.

³ See Bury, *Chronol. Cycle*.

⁴ *Responsa Nicolai*, § 103, "libri profani quos a Saracenis vos abstulisse ac apud vos habere perhibetis." Cp. Jireček, *Geschichte*, 134.

But the Bulgarians had other neighbours and foes besides the Romans, and political interests in other directions than in that of Constantinople. It is recorded that the same prince who crossed the Danube and inaugurated a new period in Bulgarian history, also drove the Avars westward,¹ and the record expresses the important fact that in the seventh century the Bulgarians succeeded to the overlordship which the Avar khans had exercised over Dacia in the reigns of Maurice and Heraclius. This influence extended to the Theiss or beyond. Eastward, their lordship was bounded by the Empire of the Khazars, but it is impossible to define the precise limit of its extent. There can be no doubt that in the seventh and eighth centuries Bulgaria included the countries known in later times as Walachia and Bessarabia,² and the authority of the khans may have been recognised even beyond the Dniester. At all events it appears to be certain that in this period Bulgarian tribes were in occupation of the coastlands from that river wellnigh to the Don, and this Bulgarian continuity was not cleft in twain till the ninth century. The more easterly portion of the people were known as the Inner Bulgarians, and they were probably considered to belong to the Empire of the Khazars. But we cannot decide whether it was at the Dniester or rather at the Dnieper that the authority of the Khazars ended and the claims of the Great Bulgarians of Moesia began.

South of the Danube, the kingdom extended to the Timok, which marked the Servian frontier.³ The Bulgarians lived on terms of unbroken friendship with the Servians, and this may perhaps be explained by the fact that between their territories the Empire still possessed an important stronghold in the city of Sardica.

For the greater security of their country the Bulgarians reinforced and supplemented the natural defences of mountain

¹ [Moses of Chorene], *Geography* (seventh cent.), cited in Westberg, *Beiträge*, ii. 312; Marquart, *Chron.* 88.

² Ser. Incertus, 345. Βουλγαρίαν ἐκείθεν τοῦ Ἰστροῦ ποταμοῦ (= Pseudo-Simeon, 615). There is no reason to suppose that when Isperikh settled in the Dobrudzha, he abandoned Bessarabia. Till the ninth century there was no power but that of the Khazars

to limit the Bulgarians on their eastern frontier, and there is no probability that the Khazars ever exerted authority further than the Dniester, if as far.

³ One point on the frontier (Constantine, *De adm. imp.* 155) seems to have been Rasa (Novi Bazar, Jireček, *Geschichte*, 150).

and river by elaborate systems of fortification and entrenchment.¹ Their kingdom, almost girt about by an artificial circumvallation, might be compared to an entrenched camp, and the stages in its territorial expansion are marked by successive ramparts. Beyond the Danube, a ditch and earthen wall connected the Pruth with the Dniester in northern Bessarabia, and a similar fence protected the angle between the mouths of the Sereth, the Danube, and the Pruth.² The early settlement of Ispcrikh at Little Preslav, near the mouth of the Danube, was fortified by a rampart across the Dobrudzha,³ following the line of older Roman walls of earth and stone, but turned to confront a foe advancing from the south, while the Roman defences had been designed against barbarians descending from the north. When the royal residence was moved to Pliska, a line of fortifications was constructed along the heights of Haemus; and a trench and rampart from the mountains to the Danube marked the western frontier. When their successes at the expense of the Empire enabled the conquerors to bestride the mountains, a new fence, traversing Thrace, marked the third position in their southward advance.⁴ The westward expansion is similarly separated by two more entrenchments connecting the Haemus with the Danube, while the right bank of that river was defended by a series of fortresses and entrenchments from Little Preslav to the neighbourhood of Nicopolis.

The main road from Constantinople to the capital of the Bulgarian kings crossed the frontier, east of the Tundzha, near the conspicuous heights of Meleona,⁵ which, still covered with

¹ The following brief description is based on Shkorpil's, in *Aboba*, c. xx. 503 sqq.; cp. also *Prilozh.* ii. 566-569. Masudi describes the "dominion" of the Bulgarians as surrounded by a thorn fence, with openings like wooden windows, and resembling a wall and canal (Harkavi, *Skazaniia*, 126). Uspenski (*Aboba*, 15) takes "dominion" to mean the royal aula, and relates the description to *Aboba*. This is a strained interpretation; but possibly Masudi's source mentioned both the circumvallation of the kingdom and the fortifications of Pliska, and Masudi confused them.

² There was also an entrenchment

in Southern Bessarabia between the Pruth and Lake Kunduk; *ib.* 524. See Schuchhardt, *Arch.-ep. Mittheilungen*, ix. 216 sqq. (1885).

³ Schuchhardt, *ib.* 87 sqq.; Tocilescu, *Fouilles et recherches archéologiques en Roumanie*, 1900 (Bucharest).

⁴ See below, p. 361.

⁵ *Aboba*, 564-565, 514, the heights of Bakadzhik. Shkorpil remarks that they "could serve as a natural boundary, before the construction of the Erkesiia." It is certain that by the middle of the eighth century at latest the Bulgarian frontier had moved south of Mount Haemus. The text bearing on this question is Theophr.

the remains of Bulgarian fortifications, marked an important station on the frontier, since they commanded the road. To the north-west of Meleona, the Bulgarians held Diampolis, which preserves its old name as Jambol, situated on the Tundzha. The direct road to Pliska did not go by Diampolis, but ran northward in a direct course to the fortress of Marcellae, which is the modern Karnobad.¹ This stronghold possessed a high strategic importance in the early period of Bulgarian history, guarding the southern end of the pass of Veregava,² which led to the gates of the Bulgarian king. Not far to the west of Veregava is the pass of Verbits, through which the road lay from Pliska to Diampolis. The whole route from Marcellae to Pliska was flanked by a succession of fortresses of earth and stone.

§ 2. *Krum and Nicephorus I.*

In the wars during the reign of Irene and Constantine VI., the Bulgarians had the upper hand; king Kardam repeatedly routed Roman armies, and in the end the Empress submitted to the humiliation of paying an annual tribute to the lord of Pliska. A period of peace ensued, lasting for about ten years (A.D. 797-807). We may surmise that the

497, who relates that Krum sought to renew with Michael I. (see below) the treaty concluded "in the reign of Theodosius of Adramyttion and the patriarchate of Germanus" with Kormisos, "then ruler of Bulgaria." There is an error here, as Tervel was the Bulgarian king in the reign of Theodosius III., and Constantine V. was Emperor in the reign of Kormisos (743-760). If we accept Theodosius, the treaty was in A.D. 716; if we accept Kormisos, it was a generation later. My view is that the treaty on which Krum based his negotiations was between Kormisos and Constantine V., but that in the text of that treaty an older treaty between Theodosius and Tervel was referred to. The decision of this question does not, of course, decide the date of the Erkesiia, as Meleona (τοὺς ὁρους ἀπὸ Μηλεώνων τῆς Θράκης, *ib.*) may have been the boundary many years before its construction. Zlatarski dates it in the reign of Tervel, Shkorpil in that of

Kormisos, Jireček in the ninth century (cp. *Aboba*, 568). See below p. 361.

¹ *Aboba*, 564, cp. 562. Jireček (*Arch.-ep. Mitth.* x. 158) wished to place Marcellae at Kaiabash. His identification is based on Anna Comnena, i. 244 and ii. 71 (ed. Reifferscheid), and he places Lardeas at Karnobad. But Shkorpil finds Lardeas at the pass of Marash (565). Both place Goloe (also mentioned by Anna) near Kadirfakli. Kadirfakli, Kaiabash, and the Marash defile lie in this order on the southward road from the Verbits pass to Jambol.

² The identification of the κλεισούρα Βερεγάβων with the Rish Pass is unquestionably right. Cp. *Aboba*, 564; Jireček, *Heeresstrasse*, 149-150. Jireček also identifies Veregava with the πύλαι σιδηραὶ or Σιδηρά of Greek historians, but Shkorpil (*Aboba*, 565) takes Σιδηρά to be the Verbits pass. I am inclined to agree with Jireček. The two neighbouring passes are together known as the Gyrlorski Pass (*ib.* 548).

attention of the Bulgarian king was at this time preoccupied by the political situation which had arisen in the regions adjacent to the Middle Danube by the advance of the Frank power and the overthrow of the Avars. On the other hand, Nicephorus who, soon after his accession, was embroiled in war with the Saracens, may have taken some pains to avoid hostilities on his northern frontier. It is at all events significant that he did not become involved in war with Bulgaria until the tide of the eastern war had abated. We do not know what cause of provocation was given, but so far as our record goes, it was the Roman Emperor who began hostilities. Kardam had in the meantime been succeeded by Krum,¹ a strong, crafty, and ambitious barbarian, whose short reign is memorable in the annals of his country.

It was in A.D. 807 that Nicephorus set forth at the head of an army to invade Bulgaria.² But when he reached Hadrianople a mutiny broke out, and he was compelled to abandon his expedition. The next hostile movement of which we hear—we cannot say which occurred—was the appearance of a Bulgarian army in Macedonia, in the regions of the Strymon, towards the close of the following year.³ Many regiments of the garrison of the province, with the stratêgos himself and the officers, were cut to pieces, and the treasury of the khan was enriched by the capture of 1100 lbs. of gold (£47,520) which had been destined to pay the soldiers. It would seem that the Romans had not expected an attack so

¹ We are quite ignorant of the internal history of Bulgaria from 797 to 807, and know neither in what year Krum acceded nor whether he was the immediate successor of Kardam. Jireček places his accession in 802-807 (*Geschichte*, 143). For the various forms of Krum's name, in Greek, Latin, and Slavonic sources, cp. Loparev, *Dvje Zamietki*, 341, n. 1. That Krum is the right form is shown by the Shumla inscription (*Κροῦμος*: *Aboba*, 233; cp. Shkorpil, *Arch.-ep. Mitth.* xix. 243). On the alleged legislation of Krum (Suidas, s.v. *Βούλγαροι*) see G. Kazarow, *B.Z.* xvi. 254-257 (1907).

² Theoph., A.M. 6299=806-807.

³ Theoph., A.M. 6301. This event is placed by all historians in 809 (Jireček, *Geschichte*, 144). But it seems to me

that the statements of Theophanes more naturally point to the last months of 808 (A.M. 6301=September 608–August 609). For after describing the affair of the Strymon the chronicler proceeds τῷ δ' αὐτῷ ἐτεῖ πρὸ τῆς ἐορτῆς τοῦ Πάσχα Κροῦμος κτλ. Now if the Bulgarians had immediately proceeded against Sardica, Theophanes would hardly have written τῷ δ' αὐτῷ ἐτεῖ, which implies that two events are independent or separated in time; and it is clear that as the capture of Sardica took place before Easter 809, it must have been immediately preceded by the victory on the Strymon, in case that victory was won in the same spring. I therefore conclude that 808 is the right date; and it seems more natural that the soldiers should have been paid before winter.

late in the year; but the presence of a considerable force in the Strymon regions points to the fact that the Bulgarians had already betrayed their designs against Macedonia. In the ensuing spring (809) Krum followed up his success on the Strymon by an attack on the town of Sardica, which seems at this time to have been the most northerly outpost of the Empire towards the Danube. He captured it not by violence, but by wily words, and put to death a garrison of six thousand soldiers and (it is said) the population of the place. It does not appear that he had conceived the idea of annexing the plain of Sardica to his realm. He dismantled the fortifications and perhaps burned the town, which was one day to be the capital of the Bulgarian name. When the tidings of the calamity arrived, Nicephorus left Constantinople in haste on the Tuesday before Easter (April 3). Although the monk, who has related these events, says nothing of his route, we can have no doubt that he marched straight to the mountains by Meleona and Marcellae, and descended on Pliska from the Veregava Pass. For he dispatched to the city an Imperial letter in which he mentioned that he spent Easter day in the palace of the Bulgarian king.¹ The plunder of Pliska was a reprisal for the sack of Sardica, to which Nicephorus then proceeded for the purpose of rebuilding it. We are not told what road he took, but he avoided meeting the victorious army of the enemy. It is said that some officers who had escaped the massacre asked Nicephorus in vain for a promise that he would not punish them, and were forced to desert to the Bulgarians.

The Emperor desired to rebuild Sardica as speedily and as cheaply as possible, and, fearing that the soldiers would be unwilling to submit to a labour which they might say was not a soldier's business, he prompted the generals and officers to induce the soldiers to address a spontaneous request to the Emperor that the city might be rebuilt. But the men saw through this stratagem, and were filled with indignation. They tore down the tents of their superiors, and, standing in front of the Emperor's pavilion, cried that they would endure

¹ Theophanes malevolently insinuates a doubt of the truth of the Emperor's statement: *σάκραις ἐνόρκους*

*τὴν βασιλίδα πόλιν πείθειν ἐσπούδαζεν-
δτι κτλ.* (485₁₄).

his rapacity no more. It was the hour of noon and Nicephorus was dining. He directed two patricians to attempt to tranquillise the army; the noise abated; the soldiers formed a company on a hillock hard by, "and, forgetting the matter in hand, kept crying, 'Lord, have mercy!'" This unorganized mutiny was soon quelled by Imperial promises,¹ and the officers were all on the Emperor's side. Punishment, however, was afterwards inflicted on the ringleaders.

Nicephorus viewed with anxiety the western provinces of his Empire in Macedonia and Thessaly. The Slavs, on whose fidelity no reliance could be placed, were predominant there, and it was the aim of the Bulgarians to bring the Macedonian Slavs under their dominion. To meet the dangers in this quarter the Emperor determined to translate a large number of his subjects from other parts of the Empire and establish them as Roman colonists in what was virtually a Slavonic land. They could keep the Slavs in check and help in repulsing Bulgarian aggression. The transmigration began in September 809 and continued until Easter 810. It seems to have been an unpopular measure. Men did not like to leave the homes to which they were attached, to sell their property, and say farewell to the tombs of their fathers. The poor cling far more to places than the rich and educated, and it was to the poor agriculturists that this measure exclusively applied. Some, we are told, were driven to desperation and committed suicide rather than go into a strange and distant land; and their richer brethren sympathized with them; in fact, the act was described as nothing short of "a captivity." But though it may have been hard on individuals, it was a measure of sound policy; and those who on other grounds were ill-disposed to the government exaggerated the odium which it aroused. Nicephorus, who, as we are told, prided himself greatly on this act,² seems to have realised the danger that the Slavonic settlements in Macedonia and Greece might eventually be gathered into a Bulgarian empire; and these new colonies were designed to obviate such a possibility.

¹ On the next day Nicephorus made a speech full of asseverations of his goodwill to the soldiers and their children. He then returned to Cyle., leaving Theodosius Salibaras to discover the ringleaders. Theophanes

says "most" were punished by stripes, banishment, or compulsory tonsure, and the rest were sent to Chrysopolis (486).

² Theoph. 496.

Meanwhile the Emperor was preparing a formidable expedition against Bulgaria, to requite Krum for his cruelties and successes. In May 811 the preparations were complete, and Nicephorus marched through Thrace at the head of a large army. The troops of the Asiatic Themes had been transported from beyond the Bosphorus; Romanus, general of the Anatolics, and Leo, general of the Armeniacs, were summoned to attack the Bulgarians, as their presence was no longer required in Asia to repel the Saracen. When he reached Marcellae, at the foot of the mountains, where he united the various contingents of his host, ambassadors arrived from Krum, who was daunted by the numbers of the Romans.¹ But the Augustus at the head of his legions had no thought of abandoning his enterprise, and he rejected all pleadings for peace. He knew well that a humiliating treaty would be violated by the enemy as soon as his own army had been disbanded; yet nothing less than a signal humiliation could atone for the massacres of Sardica and the Strymon. The march, difficult for a great army, through the pass of Veregava, occupied some time, and on the 20th of July the Romans approached the capital of Krum. Some temporary consternation was caused by the disappearance of a trusted servant of the Emperor, who deserted to the enemy with the Imperial apparel and 100 lbs. of gold.

No opposition was offered to the invaders, and the Roman swords did not spare the inhabitants. Arriving at Pliska, Nicephorus found that the king had fled; he set under lock and key, and sealed with the Imperial seal, the royal treasures, as his own spoil; and burned the palace. Then Krum said, "Lo, thou hast conquered; take all thou pleasest, and go in

¹ It is supposed by Uspenski that the Kady-keui inscription (*Aboba*, 228) may relate to the war of Nicephorus with Krum, on account of the words *καὶ εἰσῆλθεν ὁ Νικηφόρος* (l. 3). In l. 2 we have *τοὺς Γρῆκοὺς εἰς Μαρκελλας* and ll. 6-10 are concerned with the actions of a certain Ekusoos, whom "the Greeks met" and who "went to Hadrianople." It is impossible to restore a connected sense, without some external clew, and the supplements of Uspenski are quite in the air. It is

certainly more probable that Nicephorus is the Emperor, than, for instance, Nicephorus, an engineer, who took service under the Bulgarian king (see Theoph. 498). If the Emperor is meant, I conjecture that the events described may be connected with his abortive expedition in A.D. 807 and the military mutiny. This is suggested by ll. 5, 6, *ἐκ πικρὰς αἵματός* (apparently referring to Nicephorus—"in his anger") *μὴ σωρεῦ [σωσιν δυνάμεις] . . . οἱ Γραικοὶ καὶ πάλιν ἐσώρευ[σαν]*.

peace." But the victor disdained to listen. Perhaps it was his hope to recover Moesia and completely to subdue the Bulgarian power. But if this was his design it was not to be realised; Nicephorus was not to do the work which was reserved for Tzimiskes and Basil Bulgaroktonos. He allowed himself to be drawn back into the mountain where Krum and his army awaited him. It is generally supposed that an obvious precaution had been neglected and that the Romans had not taken care to guard their retreat by leaving soldiers to protect the mountain pass behind them. But it seems probable that the pass of Veregava was not the scene of the disaster which followed, and the imprudence of Nicephorus did not consist in neglecting to secure the road of return. So far as we can divine, he permitted the enemy to lure him into the contiguous pass of Verbits, where a narrow defile was blocked by wooden fortifications which small garrisons could defend against multitudes. Here, perhaps, in what is called to-day the Greek Hollow,¹ where tradition declares that many Greeks once met their death, the army found itself enclosed as in a trap, and the Emperor exclaimed, "Our destruction is certain; if we had wings, we could not escape." The Bulgarians could conceal themselves in the mountains and abide their time until their enemies were pressed by want of supplies; and as the numbers of the Roman army were so great, they would not have to wait long. But the catastrophe was accelerated by a successful night attack. The defiles had been fortified on Thursday and Friday, and on Sunday morning just before dawn the tent in which Nicephorus and the chief patricians were reposing was assailed by the heathen. The details of the attack are not recorded; perhaps they were never clearly known; but we must suppose that there was some extraordinary carelessness in the arrangements of the Roman camp. The Roman soldiers, taken unawares, seem to have been paralysed and to have allowed themselves to be massacred without resistance. Nicephorus himself was slain, and almost all the generals and great officers who were with him, among the rest the general of Thrace and the general of the Anatolics.²

¹ Groshki-Dol, between the heights of Kys-tepe and Razboina: Shkorjil Aboba, 564, and 536), whose view

as to the scene of the battle I have adopted.

² The others specially mentioned

This disaster befell on the 26th of July. It seemed more shameful than any reverse that had happened throughout the invasions of the Huns and the Avars, worse than any defeat since the fatal day of Hadrianople. After the death of Valens in that great triumph of the Visigoths, no Roman Augustus had fallen a victim to barbarians. During the fifth and sixth centuries the Emperors were not used to fight, but since the valour of Heraclius set a new example, most of the Roman sovrans had led armies to battle, and if they were not always victorious, they always succeeded in escaping. The slaughter of Nicephorus was then an event to which no parallel could be found for four centuries back, and it was a shock to the Roman world.

Krum exposed the head of the Emperor on a lance for a certain number of days. He then caused the skull to be hollowed out in the form of a large drinking howl,¹ and lined with silver, and at great banquets he used to drink in it to the health of his Slavonic bohads with the Slavonic formula "zdravitsa."²

A memorial of this disaster survived till late times at Eskibaba in Thrace, where a Servian patriarch of the seventeenth century saw the tomb of a certain Nicolas, a warrior who had accompanied the fatal expedition of Nicephorus and seen a strange warning dream. The Turks had shrouded the head of the corpse with a turban.³

§ 3. *Krum and Michael I.*

Sated with their brilliant victory, the Bulgarians did not pursue the son and son-in-law of the Emperor, who escaped from the slaughter, and they allowed the Romans ample time to arrange the succession to the throne, which,

are the patricians Aetius, Peter, Sisinnios Triphyllios, Theodosius Salibaras, and the Prefect (it is very strange to find the Prefect of the City—who can only be meant—taking part in a campaign); also the Domesticius of the Excubitors; the Drungarios of the Watch; and many other officers. Theoph. 491. In what manner Nicephorus was slain himself no one could tell. Some of his

comrades were burnt alive in a conflagration of the wooden palisades (τῶ τῆς σούδας πυρῇ).

¹ Cp. Herodotus iv. 65, and 26. See Blasel, *Die Wanderzüge der Langobarden*, 112 sq.

² σδράβριζα.

³ In the diary of a journey to Jerusalem by Arseny Černojevič (A.D. 1683), published in the *Glasnik* (33, 189); see Jireček, *op. cit.* 144.

as we have seen, was attended by serious complications. But Michael I. had not been many months established in the seat of Empire, when he received tidings that the enemy had invaded Thrace (A.D. 812). The city which Krum first attacked was near the frontier. On an inner curve of the bays, on whose northern and southern horns Anchialus and Apollonia faced each other, lay the town of Develtos. It might pride itself on its dignity as an episcopal seat, or on its strength as a fortified city. But its fortifications did not now avail it, nor yet its bishop. Krum reduced the place, and transported inhabitants and bishop beyond the mountains to Bulgaria. The Emperor meanwhile prepared to oppose the invader. On the 7th day of June he left the capital, and the Empress Procopia accompanied him as far as Tzurulon,¹ a place which still preserves its name as Chorlu, on the direct road from Selymbria to Hadrianople.

It does not seem that Michael advanced farther than to Tzurulon. The news of the fate of Develtos came, and a mutiny broke out in the army. It was thought that the Emperor had shown incompetence or had followed injudicious advice. While we can well understand that little confidence could be felt in this weak and inexperienced commander, we must also remember that there was in the army a large iconoclastic section hostile to the government. The Opsikian and Thrakesian Themes played the most prominent parts in the rioting. A conspiracy in favour of the blind brothers of Constantine V. followed upon this mutiny, and Michael returned to the City. The field was thus left to the Bulgarians, who prevailed in both Thrace and Macedonia. But the alarm felt by the inhabitants caused perhaps more confusion than the actual operations of the invaders. It does not indeed appear that the Bulgarians committed in this year any striking atrocities or won any further success of great moment. But the fate of the Roman Emperor in the previous year had worked its full effect. The dwellers in Thrace were thoroughly frightened, and when they saw no Roman army

¹ It was a town on a hill close to the tributary of the Erginus, which is called Chorlu-su. See Jireček, *Heerstrasse*, 51, 101. In the days of Justinian, Tzurulon had been stormed

by the terrible hordes of Zabergan; and in the reign of Maurice, the valiant general Priscus was besieged in this fortress by the Avars.

in the field they had not the heart to defend their towns. The taking of Develtos brought the fear home to neighbouring Anchialus on the sea. Anchialus had always been one of the firmest and strongest defences against the barbarians—against the Avars in olden days and against the Bulgarians more recently. Fifty years ago the inhabitants had seen the Bulgarian forces defeated in the neighbouring plain by the armies of the Fifth Constantine. But Michael was not like Constantine, as the men of Anchialus well knew; and now, although the defences of their city had recently been restored and strengthened by Irene, they fled from the place though none pursued. Other cities, not only smaller places like Nicaea and Probaton, but even such as Beroe and the great city of Western Thrace, Philippopolis, did likewise. The Thracian Nicaea is little known to history; it seems to have been situated to the south-east of Hadrianople. Probaton or Sheep-fort, which is to be sought at the modern Provadia, north-east of Hadrianople, had seen Roman and Bulgarian armies face to face in a campaign of Constantine VI. (A.D. 791). Stara Zagora is believed to mark the site of Beroe, at the crossing of the Roman roads, which led from Philippopolis to Anchialus and from Hadrianople to Nicopolis on the Danube. It was in this neighbourhood that the Emperor Decius was defeated by the Goths. The town had been restored by the Empress Irene, who honoured it by calling it Irenopolis;¹ but the old name persisted, as in the more illustrious cases of Antioch and Jerusalem. Macedonian Philippi behaved like Thracian Philippopolis, and those reluctant colonists whom Nicephorus had settled in the district of the Strymon seized the opportunity to return to their original dwellings in Asia Minor.²

Later in the same year (812) Krum sent an embassy to the Roman Emperor to treat for peace.³ The ambassador whom he chose was a Slav, as his name Dargamer⁴ proves. The Bulgarians wished to renew an old commercial treaty which seems to have been made about half a century before between king Kormisos and Constantine V.;⁵ and Krum threatened that

¹ For restoration of Anchialus and Beroe, see Theoph. 457; for Constantine VI. at Προβάτων κάστρον, *ib.* 467.

² See above, p. 342.

³ In October: cp. Theoph. 497, 498.

⁴ That is, Dragomir.

⁵ See above, p. 339.

he would attack Mesembria if his proposals were not immediately accepted. The treaty in question (1) had defined the frontier by the hills of Melcona; (2) had secured for the Bulgarian monarch a gift of apparel and red dyed skins to the value of £1350; (3) had arranged that deserters should be sent back; and (4) stipulated for the free intercourse of merchants between the two states in case they were provided with seals and passports;¹ the property of those who had no passport was to be forfeited to the treasury.²

After some discussion the proposal for the renewal of this treaty was rejected, chiefly on account of the clause relating to refugees. True to his threat, Krum immediately set his forces in motion against Mesembria and laid siege to it about the middle of October (812). Farther out on the bay of Anchialus than Anchialus itself, where the coast resumes its northward direction, stood this important city, on a peninsula hanging to the mainland by a low and narrow isthmus, about five hundred yards in length, which is often overflowed by tempestuous seas.³ It was famous for its salubrious waters; it was also famous for its massive fortifications. Here had lived the parents of the great Leo, the founder of the Isaurian Dynasty. Hither had fled for refuge a Bulgarian king, driven from his country by a sedition, in the days of Constantine V. Krum was aided by the skill of an Arab engineer, who, formerly in the service of Nicephorus, had been dissatisfied with that Emperor's parsimony and had fled to Bulgaria.⁴ No relief came, and Mesembria fell in a fortnight or three weeks. Meanwhile the promptness of Krum in attacking had induced Michael to reconsider his decision. The Patriarch was strongly in favour of the proposed peace; but he was opposed by Theodore, the abbot of Studion, who was intimate with Theoktistos, the Emperor's chief adviser. The discussion which was held on this occasion (November 1) illustrates how the theological atmosphere of

¹ δὲ ἀγγελίων καὶ σφραγίδων.

² This clause is not in our extant MSS. but is preserved in the Latin translation of Anastasius.

³ Cp. Jireček, *Fürstenthum*, 526.

⁴ Nicephorus settled him in Hadrianople, and when he grumbled at not receiving an adequate remuneration for his services, struck him violently

(according to Theophanes). He instructed the Bulgarians in every polioecetic contrivance (πᾶσαν μαγγανικὴν τέχνην). Theophanes mentions also the desertion of a certain spathar named Eumathios, who was μηχανικῆς ἐμπειρος, in the year 809; but there is no reason for supposing that these two were the same person.

the time was not excluded from such debates. The war party said, "We must not accept peace at the risk of subverting the divine command; for the Lord said, Him who cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out," referring to the clause concerning the surrender of refugees. The peace party, on their side, submitted that in the first place there were, as a matter of fact, no refugees, and secondly, even if there were, the safety of a large number was more acceptable to God than the safety of a few; they suggested, moreover, that the real motive of those who rejected the peace was a short-sighted parsimony,¹ and that they were more desirous of saving the 30 lbs. worth of skins than concerned for the safety of deserters; these disputants were also able to retort upon their opponents passages of Scripture in favour of peace. The war party prevailed.

Four days later the news came that Mesembria was taken. The barbarians had found it well stocked with the comforts of life, full of gold and silver; and among other things they discovered a considerable quantity of "Roman Fire," and thirty-six engines (large tubes) for hurling that deadly substance. But they did not occupy the place; they left it, like Sardica, dismantled and ruined. It would seem that, not possessing a navy, they judged that Mesembria would prove an embarrassing rather than a valuable acquisition.

All thoughts of peace were now put away, and the Emperor made preparations to lead another expedition against Bulgaria in the following year. In February (813) two Christians who had escaped from the hands of Krum announced that he was preparing to harry Thrace. The Emperor immediately set out and Krum was obliged to retreat, not without some losses. In May all the preparations were ready. The Asiatic forces had been assembled in Thrace, and even the garrisons which protected the *kleisurai* leading into Syria had been withdrawn to fight against a foe who was at this moment more formidable than the Caliph. Lycaonians,

¹ So I interpret Theophanes, *πλουρὺν* and *μικρὸν κέρδος* (498). The majority at least of the Senate were opposed to the peace, *ἀποπον ἐφάνη τὸ τῶν προσφύγων τοῖς τῆς συκλήρου βουλῆς* (*Cont. Theoph.* 13); the opinion of Theoktistos probably weighed heavily. Michael himself was in favour of

peace, and this is an instructive case of the autocrat being overruled by the opinion of the Senate. Cp. Bury, *Constitution of L.R.E.*, 31. The Continuator of Theophanes remarks that the Bulgarian kings feared lest all the population should by degrees migrate to Roman territory (*ib.*).

Isaurians, Cilicians, Cappadocians, and Galatians were compelled to march northwards, much against their will, and the Armeniacs and Cappadocians were noticed as louder than the others in their murmurs. As Michael and his generals issued from the city they were accompanied by all the inhabitants, as far as the Aqueduct.¹ Gifts and keepsakes showered upon the officers, and the Empress Procopia herself was there, exhorting the Imperial staff to take good care of Michael and "to fight bravely for the Christians."

Michael, if he had some experience of warfare, had no ability as a general, and he was more ready to listen to the advice of the ministers who had gained influence over him in the palace than to consult the opinion of two really competent military men who accompanied the expedition. These were Leo, general of the Anatolics, whom, as we have already seen, he had recalled from exile, and John Aplakes, the general of Macedonia. During the month of May the army moved about Thrace, and was little less burdensome to the inhabitants than the presence of an enemy. It was specially remarked by contemporaries that no attempt was made to recover Mesembria. Early in June Krum entered Roman territory and both armies encamped near Versinicia,² a place not far from Hadrianople. At Versinicia, nearly twenty years before, another Emperor had met another Khan. Then Kardam had skulked in a wood, and had not ventured to face Constantine. Krum, however, was bolder than his predecessor, and, contrary to Bulgarian habit, did not shrink from a pitched battle. For fifteen days they stood over against one another, neither side venturing to attack, and the heat of summer rendered this incessant watching a trying ordeal both for men and for horses. At last John Aplakes, who commanded one wing, composed of the Macedonian and Thracian troops, lost his patience and sent a decisive message to the Emperor: "How long are we to stand here and perish? I will strike first in the name of God, and then do ye follow up bravely, and we can conquer. We are ten times more numerous than

¹ For the position of Kêduktos see above, p. 101.

² Theoph. 500. Of this affair we have two independent accounts, one by Theophanes, the other in the Frag-

ment of Scriptor Incertus. The latter is the fuller, and from it we learn the details of the courage of John Aplakes (337 sqq.) Jireček (*Geschichte*, 145) wrongly places the battle in July.

they." The Bulgarians, who stood on lower ground in the valley, fell before the charge of Aplakes and his soldiers who descended on them from a slight elevation; but the brave stratēgos of Macedonia was not supported by the centre and the other wing.¹ There was a general flight without any apparent cause, and the Anatolics were conspicuous among the fugitives. Aplakes, left with his own men, far too few to hold their ground, fell fighting. The enemy were surprised and alarmed at this inexplicable behaviour of an army so far superior in numbers, so famous for its discipline. Suspecting some ambush or stratagem the Bulgarians hesitated to move. But they soon found out that the flight was genuine, and they followed in pursuit. The Romans threw away their weapons, and did not arrest their flight until they reached the gates of the capital.

Such was the strange battle which was fought between Hadrianople and Versinicia on June 22, A.D. 813. It has an interest as one of the few engagements in which an army chiefly consisting of Slavs seems to have voluntarily opposed a Roman host on open ground. As a rule the Slavs and Bulgarians avoided pitched battles in the plain and only engaged in mountainous country, where their habits and their equipment secured them the advantage. But Krum seems to have been elated by his career of success, and to have conceived for his opponents a contempt which prompted him to desert the traditions of Bulgarian warfare. His audacity was rewarded, but the victory was not due to any superiority on his side in strategy or tactics. Historians have failed to realise the difficulties which beset the battle of Versinicia, or to explain the extraordinary spectacle of a Roman army, in all its force, routed in an open plain by a far smaller army of Slavs and Bulgarians. It was a commonplace that although the Bulgarians were nearly sure to have the upper hand in mountainous defiles they could not cope in the plain with a Roman army, even much smaller than their own. The soldiers knew this well themselves,² and it is impossible to believe that the

¹ Our sources do not state the order of battle, but we may conclude that Michael commanded the centre, Aplakes and Leo the two wings. Leo's wing consisted of the Anatolics

and, perhaps, the Cappadocians; the Opsikians, Armeniacs, and others would have been in the centre.

² *Ser. Incert.* 338, ἐξωθεν δὲ ἐπὶ κάμπου νικῆσαι αὐτοὺς ἐχομεν.

Anatolic troops, disciplined by warfare against the far more formidable Saracens, were afraid of the enemy whom they met in Thrace.

The only reasonable explanation of the matter is treachery, and treachery was the cause assigned by contemporary report.¹ The Anatolic troops feigned cowardice and fled; their flight produced a panic and the rest fled too. Others may have been in the plot besides the Anatolics, but the soldiers of Leo, the Armenian, were certainly the prime movers. The political consequences of the battle show the intention of the Asiatic troops in courting this defeat. The Emperor Michael lost credit and was succeeded by Leo. This was what the Asiatic soldiers desired. The religious side of Michael's rule was highly unpopular in Phrygia and the districts of Mount Taurus, and Michael himself was, probably, a Thracian or Macedonian. The rivalry between the Asiatic and European nobles, which played an important part at a later period of history, was perhaps already beginning; and it is noteworthy that the Thracians and Macedonians under Aplakes were the only troops who did not flee. Reviewing all the circumstances, so far as we know them, we cannot escape the conclusion that the account is right which represents the regiments of Leo, if not Leo himself, as guilty of intentional cowardice on the field of Versinicia. It was planned to discredit Michael and elevate Leo in his stead, and the plan completely succeeded.

¹ The question really is, how far Leo was himself privy to the conduct of his troops. Hirsch acquits Leo of *ἐθελοκακία* (p. 125). The data are as follows: (1) Theophanes does not hint at intentional cowardice on the part of either general or soldiers. But we must remember that Theophanes wrote the end of his history just at the time of Leo's accession, and says nothing unfavourable to that monarch. (2) The Scriptor Incertus accuses the *Θέμα τῶν ἀνατολικῶν*, without specially mentioning the commander. As the author is violently hostile to Leo, this silence is in Leo's favour. (3) Ignatius, *Vita Nicephori*, c. 31, accuses Leo as the author of the defeat (p. 163): *τῆς ἡττης Λέων πρωτεργάτης γενόμενος παντὶ τῷ στρατοπέδῳ τὴν μετ' αὐτοῦ φύγην ἐμαεῦσατο*. (4) Genesios states that there were two reports

of Leo's conduct, one adverse and one favourable: (α) that Leo's retreat was treacherous; (β) that he was posted at a distance from the army by Michael and bidden not to take part in the combat—at least this seems to be the meaning. Hirsch thinks that (α) was derived from some pasquinade or *Spottgedicht*. (5) In *Cont. Th.* (14), there are likewise two accounts: (α) Leo led the flight, *τὴν βασιλείαν αἰέτως ἐπέζητῶν*. This the author professes to have got from a written source, *ἐγγράφως* (from Ignatius?). (β) Leo and his soldiers stood their ground bravely; it was the soldiers commanded by the Emperor who fled. My conclusion from all this is that Leo was really in the plot, but played his cards so cleverly that nobody could prove anything against him, although there were the gravest suspicions.

§ 4. *The Bulgarian Siege of Constantinople (A.D. 813)*

After his victory over the army of Michael, the king of the Bulgarians resolved to attempt the siege of two great cities at the same time. He had good reason to be elated by his recent successes against the Roman Empire; he might well dream of winning greater successes still. He had achieved what few enemies of the Empire in past time could boast that they had done. He had caused the death of two Emperors and the downfall of a third; for he might attribute the deposition of Michael to his own victory; and within two years he had annihilated one Roman army and signally defeated another. In point of fact, these successes were due rather to luck than to merit; the Bulgarian king had shown craft but no conspicuous ability in generalship; the battles had not been won by superiority in tactics or by signal courage. But the facts could not be ignored; the head of a Roman Emperor was a drinking-cup in the palace of Pliska, and a large Roman army had been routed near Hadrianople.

It was an ambition of Leo the Armenian, as has been already noticed, to emulate the great Isaurian Emperors of the previous century; and fortune gave him, at his very accession, an opportunity of showing how far he could approach in military prowess the Fifth Constantine, whom the Bulgarians had found so formidable. Krum left his brother to blockade the city of Hadrian, and advanced himself to lay siege to the city of Constantine. He appeared before it six days after the accession of the new Emperor. In front of the walls he made a display of his power, and in the park outside the Golden Gate he prepared sacrifices of men and animals. The Romans could see from the walls how this "new Sennacherib" laved his feet on the margin of the sea and sprinkled his soldiers; they could hear the acclamations of the barbarians, and witness the procession of the monarch through a line of his concubines, worshipping and glorifying their lord.¹ He then asked the Emperor to allow him to fix his lance on the Golden Gate as an emblem of victory; and when the proposal was refused he

¹ These details are given by the church of SS. Cosmas and Damian Scriptor Incertus (342). Krum's headquarters seem to have been near the (ib. 343).

retired to his tent.¹ Having produced no impression by his heathen parade, and having failed to daunt New Rome, he threw up a rampart and plundered the neighbourhood for several days. But there was no prospect of taking the queen of cities where so many, greater than he, had failed before, and he soon offered terms of peace, demanding as the price a large treasure of gold and raiment, and a certain number of chosen damsels.² The new Emperor Leo saw in the overtures of the enemy a good opportunity to carry out a design, which in the present age public opinion would brand as an infamous act of treachery, but which the most pious of contemporary monks, men by no means disposed to be lenient to Leo, regarded as laudable. The chronicler Theophanes, whom Leo afterwards persecuted, said that the failure of the plot was due to our sins.³

The Emperor sent a message to Krum: "Come down to the shore, with a few unarmed men, and we also unarmed will proceed by boat to meet you. We can then talk together and arrange terms." The place convened was on the Golden Horn, just north of the seawall; and at night three armed men were concealed in a house⁴ outside the Gate of Blachern, with directions to issue forth and slay Krum when a certain sign was given by one of Leo's attendants.

Next day the Bulgarian king duly rode down to the shore, with three companions, namely his treasurer,⁵ a Greek deserter, Constantine Patzikos, who had married Krum's sister, and the son of this Constantine. Krum dismounted and sat on the ground; his nephew held his horse ready, "saddled and bridled."⁶ Leo and his party soon arrived in the Imperial barge, and while they conversed, Hexabulios,⁷ who was with Leo, suddenly covered his face with his hands. The motion offended the sensitive pride of the barbarian; highly offended he started to his feet and leaped upon his horse. Nor was he too soon; for the gesture was the concerted sign, and the

¹ Theoph. 503. Simeon transcribes Theophanes with inconsiderable verbal changes (Leo Gr. 207).

² καὶ κοράσια ἐπιλεκτά ποσότητά τινα. These facts and the details of the attempt to slay Krum are recorded by the Scriptor Incertus. Loparev (*op. cit.* 345) suggests that Krum was insisting on the fulfilment of the treaty of Kormis or, as he thinks, of Tervel.

³ Theophanes, however, clearly wrote these pages in the first years of Leo's reign.

⁴ ἐν δωματίῳ τισὶν τῶν Γάλλης.

⁵ λογοθέτης.

⁶ στρωμένον χαλινωμένον (Scr. Inc. 343).

⁷ Doubtless John Hexabulios (see above, p. 27).

armed ambush rushed out from the place of hiding. The attendants of Krum pressed on either side of him as he rode away, trying to defend him or escape with him; but, as they were on foot, the Greeks were able to capture them. Those who watched the scene from the walls, and saw, as they thought, the discomfiture of the pagan imminent, cried out, "The cross has conquered"; the darts of the armed soldiers were discharged after the retreating horseman; but though they hit him he received no mortal wound,¹ and escaped, now more formidable than ever, as his ferocity was quickened by the thirst of vengeance. His treasurer was slain; his brother-in-law and nephew were taken alive.

On the next day the wrath of the deceived Bulgarian blazed forth in literal fire. The inhabitants of the city, looking across the Golden Horn, witnessed the conflagration of the opposite suburbs, churches, convents, and palaces, which the enemy plundered and destroyed.² They did not stay their course of destruction at the mouth of the Golden Horn. They burned the Imperial Palace of St. Mamas, which was situated opposite to Scutari, at the modern Beshik-tash, to the south of Orta Keui.³ They pulled down the ornamental columns, and carried away, to deck the residence of their king, the sculptured images of animals which they found in the hippodrome of the palace and packed in waggons.⁴ All living things were butchered. Their ravages were extended northwards along the shores of the Bosphorus, and in the inland region behind.⁵ But this was only the beginning of the terrible vengeance. The suburbs outside the Golden Gate, straggling as far as Rhegion, were consigned to the flames, and we cannot suppose that their energy of destruction spared the palace of Hebdomon.

¹ *Ann. r. F.*, A.D. 813 "graviter vulneratum." The notice in these annals of the Bulgarian War and the accession of Leo was derived from the Greek ambassadors who visited the court of Lewis in A.D. 814. Cp. *Neues Archiv*, 21, 55.

² *Ser. Inc.* 344, clearly designates the locality by ἀντιπέραν τῆς πόλεως. Some of the larger churches here had been recently restored by Irene, Nicephorus, and Michael.

³ The position of the palace, as to which totally false ideas were current

(some placing it near Blachernae), has been demonstrated by Pargoire, *S. Mamas*.

⁴ *Ser. Inc. ib. τὰ ζωδια*. Theophanes, 503, gives details: a bronze lion, a bear, and a serpent, and other μάρμαροι ἐπιλεκτοί. Shkorpil asserts (*Aboda*, 116), that according to our sources Krum also carried away some marble columns. He may have done so, but our sources do not say so. *Ser. Inc.* says that the Bulgarians τοὺς κίονας κατέκλσαν.

⁵ *Ser. Inc. ib. καὶ τὴν ἐνω*.

The fort of Athyras and a bridge of remarkable size and strength¹ over the river of the same name, which flows into the Propontis, were destroyed. Along the western highroad the avenger advanced till he reached Selymbria, where he destroyed the churches and rased the citadel. The fort of Daónin² was levelled, and the first obstacle in the path of destruction was the strong wall of Heraclea which had once defied Philip of Macedon. Unable to enter it the Bulgarians burned the suburbs and the houses of the harbour. Continuing their course, they rased the fort of Rhaedestos³ and the castle of Apros. Having spent ten days there, they marched southward to the hills of Ganos,⁴ whither men and beasts had fled for concealment. The fugitives were easily dislodged from their hiding-places by the practised mountaineers; the men were slain; the women, children, and animals were sent to Bulgaria. After a visit of depredation to the shore of the Hellespont, the desolater returned slowly, capturing forts as he went, to Hadrianople, which his brother had not yet succeeded in reducing by blockade. Poliorcetic engines were now applied; hunger was already doing its work; no relief was forthcoming; and the city perforce surrendered. All the inhabitants, including the archbishop Manuel, were transported to "Bulgaria" beyond the Danube,⁵ where they were permitted to live in a settlement, governed by one of themselves and known as "Macedonia."⁶

It was now the turn of the Imperial government to make overtures for peace, and of the victorious and offended Bulgarian to reject them. Leo then took the field himself⁷

¹ παράξενον οὖσαν καὶ πᾶν ὄχυρὸν τήν. For the locality see above, p. 102.

² The old Daunian teichos on the road from Selymbria to Heraclea.

³ At this point the road left the coast and reached the fort of Apros, more than twenty Roman miles W. of Rhaedestos (Bisanthe). See Kiepert's Map of Illyricum and Thrace.

⁴ On the coast of the Propontis, over against Proconnesus.

⁵ Scr. Inc. 345 εἰς Βουλγαρίαν ἐκείθεν τοῦ Ἰστρου ποταμοῦ. Simeon (*Cont. Georg.* 765), καὶ μετὰ λαοῦ πλείστον διαπεράσας τῶν τε εὐγενῶν Μακεδόνων, κατεσκήνωσεν ἐν τῷ Δανουβίῳ ποταμῷ.

Simeon (*ib.* 817) numbers the captives as 10,000 men, as well as women. The Chronography of Theophanes ends with the capture of Hadrianople — καὶ ταύτην ἐλῶν. The capture of the Archbishop Manuel we learn from the history of Basil I. by Constantine Porphyrogenetos, forming the 5th Book of the *Continuatio Theophanis*, 216. The parents of Basil lived in Hadrianople and were on this occasion carried into captivity.

⁶ See below, p. 370.

⁷ This campaign is not noticed by George or by the Scriptor Incertus. Our authority is the combined testimony of *Cont. Th.* (24-25) and *Genesios*

and by a stratagem, successfully executed, he inflicted an overwhelming defeat on the army of the enemy, or a portion of it which was still active in the neighbourhood of Mesembria. Entrenching himself near that city and not far from the Bulgarian camp, he waited for some days. The Roman troops had command of abundant supplies, but he soon heard that the Bulgarians were hard pressed for food. Confiding his plan only to one officer, Leo left the camp by night with a company of experienced warriors, and lay in ambush on an adjacent hill. Day dawned, and the Romans, discovering that the Emperor was not in the camp, imagined that he had fled. The tidings reached the camp of the enemy before evening, and the barbarians thought that their adversaries were now delivered an easy prey into their hands. Intending to attack the Roman camp on the morrow, and meanwhile secure, they left aside the burden of their arms and yielded to the ease of sleep. Then Leo and his men descended in the darkness of the night and wrought great slaughter. The Roman camp had been advised of the stratagem just in time to admit of their co-operation, and not soon enough to give a deserter the opportunity of perfidy. The Bulgarians were annihilated; not a firebearer, to use the Persian proverb, escaped. This success was followed up by an incursion into Bulgaria; and Leo's policy was to spare those who were of riper

(12-13), who drew here from a common source which is most fully reproduced in *Cont. Th.* The campaign must be placed in the late autumn of A.D. 813, after the capture of Hadrianople, which probably determined Leo to sue for peace. Jireček assigns it to A.D. 814 (*Geschichte*, 146), placing Krum's death in A.D. 815. But it is clear from the narrative of the Script. Inc. that only one winter passed between Leo's accession and Krum's death (346 sq.). Hirsch (125-126) regards this episode as a legend, suggesting that it was invented to explain the name *Βουρὸς Λέορρος*. His grounds seem to be the silence of Theophanes and Simeon, a statement of the Scr. Inc. "über den ungünstigen Verlauf des Feldzuges," and the charge of inactivity brought against Leo in Ignatius, *Vit. Niceph.* c. 34. But these arguments have no weight. The silence of Theophanes has no

bearing on the question, as his chronicle ends with the capture of Hadrianople, and Leo's expedition was certainly later. George's notices of military events are so scrappy and meagre that his silence proves nothing. The Scr. Inc. says that during the Bulgarian ravages which he has described Leo did not leave the city (346 καὶ τούτων γενομένων ὁ Λέων τῆς πόλεως οὐκ ἐξῆλθεν). This was literally true, but the author, bitterly hostile to Leo, cannot be considered incapable of having deliberately suppressed a subsequent success, and his silence is not a convincing argument. The imputation of Ignatius came similarly from the hostile camp, which employed every weapon of calumny against the iconoclast. The details in *Cont. Th.* do not suggest a legend, and the account has been accepted by all historians (including Finlay, Hopf, and Hertzberg).

years, while he destroyed their children by dashing them against stones.

Henceforward the hill on which Leo had lain in ambush "was named the hill of Leo,¹ and the Bulgarians, whenever they pass that way, shake the head and point with the finger, unable to forget that great disaster."

The ensuing winter was so mild, and the rivers so low, that an army of 30,000 Bulgarians crossed the frontier and advanced to Arcadiopolis. They passed the river Erginus and made many captives. But when they returned to the river, they found that a week's rain had rendered it impassable, and they were obliged to wait for two weeks on the banks. The waters gradually subsided, a bridge was made, and 50,000 captives were led back to Bulgaria, while the plunder was carried in waggons, loaded with rich Armenian carpets, blankets and coverlets, raiment of all kinds, and bronze utensils.² His censorious critics alleged that the Emperor was remiss in not seizing the opportunity to attack the invaders during the enforced delay.

Shortly after this incursion, tidings reached Constantinople that it was destined soon to be the object of a grand Bulgarian expedition. Krum was himself engaged in collecting a great host; "all the Slavonias" were contributing soldiers; and, from his Empire beyond the Danube, Avars as well as Slavs were summoned to take part in despoiling the greatest city in the world. Poliorcetic machines of all the various kinds which New Rome herself could dispose of were being prepared for the service of Bulgaria. The varieties of these engines, of which a list is recorded, must be left to curious students of the poliorcetic art to investigate. There were "three-throwers" and "four-throwers," tortoises, fire-hurlers and stone-hurlers, rams, little scorpions, and "dart-stands," besides a large supply of balls, slings, long ladders, levers, and ropes (*ὄρυσας*), and the inevitable "city-takers" (*ἐλεπόλεις*).³ In the stables of the king fed a thousand oxen destined to draw the engines, and five thousand iron-bound cars were prepared. The attempt which had been made on his life still rankled in Krum's

¹ ὁ βουνὸς Λέοντος.

² Scriptor Incertus, p. 347 Ἀρμενια-
τικὰ στρατηγομαλωτάρια καὶ νακοτάπητα
ἀνώπεα καὶ ἱματισμὸν πολλὸν καὶ

χαλκῶματα ἐφόρτωσαν πάντα εἰς ἀμάξας.
He calls the Erginos the Πηγῖνα.

³ *Ib.*

memory, and he determined to direct his chief efforts against Blachernae, the quarter where the arrow had wounded him.

Leo had taken measures for the defence of the city. He employed a large number of workmen to build a new wall¹ outside that of Heraclius, and he caused a wide moat to be dug. But, as it turned out, these precautions proved unnecessary; and, indeed, the work was not completed when the death of Krum changed the situation. The most formidable of the Bulgarian monarchs with whom the Empire had yet to deal died suddenly through the bursting of a blood-vessel on the 14th of April 814,² and his plan perished with him.

§ 5. *The Reign of Omurtag*

After the death of Krum, Bulgaria was engaged and distracted by a struggle for the throne. Of this political crisis we have no clear knowledge,³ but it appears that it ended by the triumph of a certain Tsok over one, if not two, rivals. The rule of Tsok is described as inhumane. He is said to have required all the Christian captives, both clerical and lay, to renounce their religion, and when they refused, to have put them to death. But his reign was brief. It

¹ See above, p. 94.

² δόκτῳς σφαγιασθὲς, streams of blood issuing from mouth, nose, and ears (Scr. Incert. 348). The cause of Attila's death was similar. The date, according to Roman captives who returned from Bulgaria, was "the great Fifth of Paschal," that is Holy Thursday = April 14, 814 (Krug, *Kritischer Versuch*, 156; Loparev, *Две Заметки*, 348). The date 815 maintained by Schafarik and Jireček cannot be accepted in view of the data in Scr. Inc. (see above, p. 357, n. 8).

³ In the Slavonic Prologue (ed. Moscow, 1877, under Jan. 2, p. 42) it is stated that after Krum's death Dukum seized the throne, but died and was succeeded by the cruel Ditseng, who mutilated the hands of Archbishop Mannel (see above, p. 356), and was succeeded by Omurtag. In the Menologion of Basil II., Τζόκος ὁ ἀθεώτατος is named as the successor

of Krum, and his persecution of the Christian captives noticed (Pars ii., Jan. 22, in Migne, *P.G.* 117, 276-277). Loparev (*op. cit.* 348-349) thinks that Dukum, Ditseng, and Tsok were only military leaders who played an important rôle. I am disposed to conjecture that Ditseng (who is described as cruel and was slain) and Tsok were one and the same. These intermediate reigns are not mentioned in the Greek chronicles, and Theophylactus (as well as *Cont. Th.* 217) represents Omurtag as Krum's successor (*Hist. xv. mart.* 192). The name Tsok occurs in the form Τζόκος in an inscription found north of Aboba, and dated to the year A.M. 6328 = A.D. 819-820, but so mutilated that little can be made of it (*Aboba*, 226-227). According to the *Menol. Bas.* it was Krum who mutilated Archbishop Manuel, who (acc. to *Cont. Th.* 217) was put to death by Omurtag.

was possibly before the end of the year (A.D. 814) that he was slain, and succeeded by Omurtag, the son of Krum.¹

The first important act of the sublime Khan Omurtag² was to conclude a formal treaty of peace with the Roman Empire (A.D. 815-816). It is probable that a truce or preliminary agreement had been arranged immediately after Krum's death,³ but when Krum's son ascended the throne negotiations were opened which led to a permanent peace.⁴ The contracting parties agreed that the treaty should continue in force for thirty years, with a qualification perhaps that it should be confirmed anew at the expiration of each decennium.⁵ A fortunate chance has preserved a portion of what appears to be an official abstract of the instrument, inscribed on a marble column and set up in the precincts of his residence at Pliska by order of the Bulgarian king.⁶ Provision was made for the interchange and ransom of captives,⁷ and the question of the surrender of deserters, on which the negotiations between Krum and Michael I. had fallen through, was settled in a manner satisfactory to Omurtag. All the Slavs who had been undoubtedly subject to the Bulgarians in the period before the war, and had deserted to the Empire, were to be sent back to their various districts. The most important articles concerned the delimitation of the frontier which

¹ That Omurtag was son of Krum is directly affirmed by Theophylactus (*loc. cit.*); and would be probable from the fact that Omurtag's son Malamir calls Krum "my grandfather" (inscription in *Aboba*, 233)—the alternative being that Omurtag was Krum's son-in-law.

² The true form of the name, attested by his inscriptions (Ὀμουράγ), is preserved in Latin sources (Omortag). Theophylactus (*Hist. xv. mart.* 192) calls him Ὀμβρίταγος, the Greek chronicles have Μορδάγων or Μορράγων.

³ I have conjectured (*Bulgarian Treaty of A.D. 814*, pp. 286-287) that a fragment of such an agreement may be preserved in the inscription of Eski-Juma (*Aboba*, 226).

⁴ *Cont. Th.* expressly ascribes the treaty to Omurtag (658 πρὸς αὐτόν), Genesisios (41 πρὸς αὐτούς) leaves it open. For the further evidence of the inscription of Malamir see my article on the treaty (*op. cit.*). In 823 the first decennium of the thirty years was near

expiration (συνεπλήρουν σχεδόν, *Gen. loc. cit.*). Jireček dates the treaty A.D. 815, Loparev and Zlatarski 816. I am inclined to believe that 815-816 is right (not 814, as I argued *op. cit.*). We must not press too far the σχεδόν of Genesisios; and other evidence makes it likely that the twentieth year of the period determined c. 836, and the thirtieth c. 846.

⁵ This seems to be implied in the passage of Genesisios.

⁶ The inscription of Suleiman-keui (*Aboba*, 220 sqq.). Uspenski proposed to refer it to the beginning of the reign of Michael II. I have shown (*op. cit.*) that it contains a text or abstract of the Thirty Years' Treaty.

⁷ The common people (private soldiers) were to be interchanged, man for man. A ransom of so much a head was to be paid for Roman officers. A special arrangement was made for the redemption of Greeks who had been found in forts which the commanders had deserted.

divided Thrace between the two sovrans.¹ The new boundary ran westward from Develtos to Makrolivada, a fortress situated between Hadrianople and Philippopolis, close to the junction of the Hebrus with its tributary the Arzus. At Makrolivada the frontier-line turned northward and proceeded to Mt. Haemus. The Bulgarians, who put their faith in earthworks and circumvallations, proposed to protect the boundary, and give it a visible form, by a rampart and trench. The Imperial government, without whose consent the execution of such a work would have been impossible, agreed to withdraw the garrisons from the forts in the neighbourhood of the frontier during the construction of the fortification, in order to avoid the possibility of hostile collisions.

The remains of the Great Fence,² which marked the southern boundary of the Bulgarian kingdom in the ninth and tenth centuries, can be traced across Thrace, and are locally known as the Erkesia.³ Some parts of it are visible to the eye of the inexperienced traveller, while in others the line has disappeared or has to be investigated by the diligent attention of the antiquarian. Its eastern extremity is near the ruins of Develtos,⁴ on that inlet of the Black Sea whose horns were guarded by the cities of Anchialus and Apollonia. It can be followed easily in its westward course, past Rusokastro, as far as the river Tundzha, for about forty miles; beyond that river it is more difficult to trace,⁵ but its western extremity seems to have been discovered at Makrolivada, near the modern village of Trnovo-Seimen.⁶ The line roughly

¹ It is possible that some new small district was conceded to the Bulgarians. Michael Syr. 26 states that Leo made peace with them, surrendering to them the marsh for which they fought.

² μεγάλη σούδα, Cedrenus, ii. 372.

³ So called from the Turkish *jerkese*, a cutting in the earth. The eastern part of its course is described by Jireček, *Fürstenthum*, 505 sq. Surviving legends as to the origin of the structure are mentioned by Jireček (*Arch.-ep. Mitth.* x. 137) and Shkorpil (*Aboba*, 542). Jireček heard at Rusokastro the tradition that the rampart was *sinor* (σίνωρον)—a boundary (between the dominions of two brothers: Shkorpil); it was wrought, by a tsar's

orders, by men and women, and so pressing was the work that only one woman was left at home to take care of nine children. The same story is told elsewhere among the Slavs, of the erection of great buildings.

⁴ Colonia Flavia Pacis Deultensium, or Deultum, founded by Vespasian, was called in Byzantine times Δεβελρός. The traces of the "wall" begin at the west end of the lagoon of Mandra.

⁵ The length of the western section from the Tundzha is 64 kils., a little less than the eastern.

⁶ Near the junction of R. Hebrus and R. Arzus, now called Szaly-dere. The Roman station Arzus is doubtless to be identified with the ruins at Teke-Musachevo, and here the rampart was

corresponds to the modern boundary between Turkey and Bulgaria. The rampart was on the north, the ditch on the south, showing that it was designed as a security against the Empire; the rampart was probably surmounted, like the wall of Pliska, by timber palisades,¹ and the Bulgarians maintained a constant watch and ward along their boundary fences.² In the eastern section, near the heights of Meleona, the line of defence was strengthened by a second entrenchment to the south, extending for about half a mile in the form of a bow, and locally known as the Gipsy Erkesiia, but we do not know the origin or date of this fortification.³ It would seem that the Bulgarians contented themselves with this fence, for no signs have been discovered of a similar construction on the western frontier, between Makrolivada and the mountains.

Sanctity was imparted to the contract by the solemn rites of superstition. Omurtag consented to pledge his faith according to the Christian formalities, while Leo, on his part, showing a religious toleration only worthy of a pagan, did not scruple to conform to the heathen customs of the barbarians. Great was the scandal caused to pious members of the Church when the Roman Emperor, "peer of the Apostles," poured on the earth a libation of water, swore upon a sword, sacrificed dogs, and performed other unholy rites.⁴ Greater, if possible, was their indignation, when the

cut by the great military road from Hadrianople to Philippopolis. The western section was cut by another road which branched off from the military road at Lefke and led over the Balkans to Nicopolis on the Jantra; and also by the road from Hadrianople to Kabyle (Sliven), which followed the right bank of the Tundzha (*Aboba*, 539-540). Shkorpil thinks that the frontier continued westward (no traces of the wall are found beyond Teke-Musachevo) to Constantia (S. Kostenets) in the northern foothills of Rhodope, and thence northward to the pass of Succii (Βουλγαρική κλεισις) near Ichtiman; whence beyond the mountains it followed the line of the middle entrenchment of West Bulgaria (from Khairadin to Kiler-bair-kale on the Danube). But Constantia, which is mentioned in the inscriptions as on the frontier, was probably a different place.

¹ Cp. Theoph. 490, the use of ξύλινα ὀχυρώματα.

² Nicolaus, *Responso*, 25.

³ *Aboba*, 542-543. Tradition says that the Tsar's soldiers were called away before they had completed the chief entrenchment, and ordered the gipsies to finish it. The gipsies deflected the line to the south, and the soldiers when they returned continued their entrenchment in its previous direction.

⁴ Ignatius, *Vit. Nic.* p. 206. This passage is ignored by Bulgarian historians, though it points to some curious and obscure customs. ἐν αἷς (συμβάσει) ἦν ὁρᾶν τὸν βασιλεῆ· Ῥωμαίων ἐκ κύλικος ὕδωρ κατὰ γῆς ἐπιλείβοντα, ἐπιστάγματα ἱππῶν αὐτοουργῶς ἀναστρέφοντα, ἱμάντων ἐντέριων ἀπτόμενον, καὶ χόρτον εἰς ὕψος αἶροντα καὶ διὰ πάντων τούτων ἑαυτὸν ἐπαρώμενον. For the sacrifice of dogs see *Consl. Th.* p. 31; Jircěck, *Geschichte*, p. 132.

heathen envoys were invited to pollute by their touch a copy of the Holy Gospels; and to these impieties earthquakes and plagues, which happened subsequently, were attributed.¹

This peace, which the Bulgarians considered satisfactory for many years to come,² enabled Omurtag to throw his energy into the defence of his western dominions against the great German Empire, which had begun to threaten his influence even in regions south of the Danube. The Slavonic peoples were restless under the severe yoke of the sublime Khan, and they were tempted by the proximity of the Franks, whose power had extended into Croatia, to turn to the Emperor Lewis for protection. The Slavs of the river Timok, on the borders of Servia, who were under Bulgarian lordship, had recently left their abodes and sought a refuge within the dominion of Lewis.³ Their ambassadors presented themselves at his court in A.D. 818, but nothing came of the embassy, for the Timocians were induced⁴ to throw in their lot with Liudewit, the Croatian župan, who had defied the Franks and was endeavouring to establish Croatian independence. It seemed for a moment that the Croatian leader might succeed in creating a Slavonic realm corresponding to the old Diocese of Illyricum, and threatening Italy and Bavaria; but the star of Liudewit rose and declined rapidly; he was unable to cope with the superior forces of Lewis, and his flight was soon followed by his death (A.D. 823).⁵ The Franks established their ascendancy in Croatia, and soon afterwards Bulgarian ambassadors appeared in Germany and sought an audience of the Emperor (A.D. 824).⁶ It was the first time that a Frank monarch had received an embassy from a Bulgarian khan. The ambassadors bore a letter from Omurtag, who seems to have proposed a pacific regulation of

¹ Gen. 28.

² It was doubtless renewed at the expiration of the decennial and vicennial periods. Michael Syr. 50 (cp. 73) says the Bulgarians submitted to Theophilus. This, if it means anything, probably means that on the accession of Theophilus the peace was confirmed. As to hostile designs of Leo against Bulgaria after the treaty, there is no evidence. The anecdote that Sabbatios (see above, p. 59) pro-

mised that he would fix his sword *εἰς τὴν χαλκὴν ἀλωνα τῆς αὐλῆς αὐτῶν*—even if it had any value—obviously refers to the situation before the peace (*Epist. Symod. ad Theoph.* 368).

³ *Ann. r. Fr.* 818, p. 149.

⁴ *Ib.* 819, p. 150.

⁵ *Ib.* p. 161.

⁶ *Ib.* p. 164. The embassy arrived at the beginning of the year, and returned at Christmas (p. 165).

the boundaries between the German and Bulgarian dominions.¹ Their empires touched at Singidunum, which was now a Croatian town,² under its new Slavonic name of Belgrade, the "white city," and the Bulgarian ruler probably claimed that his lordship extended, northward from Belgrade, as far perhaps as Pest, to the banks of the Danube. The Emperor Lewis cautiously determined to learn more of Bulgaria and its king before he committed himself to an answer, and he sent the embassy back along with an envoy of his own.³ They returned to Bavaria at the end of the year. In the meantime an embassy arrived from a Slavonic people, whose denomination the German chroniclers disguised under the name Praedenecenti.⁴ They were also known, or were a branch of a people known, as the Abodrites, and must be carefully distinguished from the northern Abodrites, whose homes were on the Lower Elbe. This tribe, who seem to have lived on the northern bank of the Danube, to the east of Belgrade, suffered, like the Timocians, under the oppressive exactions of the Bulgarians, and, like them, looked to the advance of the Franks as an opportunity for deliverance. Lewis, whom they had approached on previous occasions,⁵ received their envoys in audience, and kept the Bulgarians waiting for nearly six months. Finally he received them at Aachen, and dismissed them with an ambiguous letter to their master.⁶

It is clear that Lewis deemed it premature to commit his policy to a definite regulation of the boundaries of the south-eastern mark, or to give any formal acknowledgment to the Bulgarian claims on the confines of Pannonia and Croatia; but he hesitated to decline definitely the proposals of the

¹ *Ib.* "velut pacis faciendae"; 167, "de terminis ac finibus inter Bulgaros ac Francos constituendis."

² Constantine, *De adm. imp.* 151, enumerates τὸ Βελόγπαδον among the Croatian towns. Cp. 153.

³ *Ann. r. Fr.* p. 164, "ad explorandam diligentius insolitae et nunquam prius in Franciam venientis legationis causam."

⁴ *Ib.* 165, "Abodritorum qui vulgo Praedenecenti vocantur et contermini Bulgaris Daciam Danubio adjacentem incolunt." It is supposed that Prae-

deneenti is a corruption of a name connected with Branitschevo, which lay on the Danube, where the Mlava flows in, and corresponded to the ancient Viminacium. The site is marked by the ruins of Branitschevats and Kostolats. See Schafarik, ii. 209; Dümmler, *Slawen in Dalm.* 376; Simson, *Ludwig der Fr.* i. 139.

⁵ In A.D. 818 (*Ann. r. Fr.* 149) and A.D. 822 (*ib.* 159). Cp. Dümmler, *Südöstl. Marken*, 28.

⁶ *Ib.* 167. Astronomus, *Vita Hrodovici*, c. 39 (*M.G.H., Scr.* ii.).

Khan. Omurtag, impatient of a delay which encouraged the rebellious spirit of his Slavonic dependencies, indited another letter, which he dispatched by the same officer who had been the bearer of his first missive (A.D. 826).¹ He requested the Emperor to consent to an immediate regulation of the frontier; and if this proposal were not acceptable, he asked that, without any formal treaty, each power should keep within his own borders. The terms of this message show that the principal object of Omurtag was an agreement which should restrain the Franks from intervening in his relations to his Slavonic subjects. Lewis found a pretext for a new postponement. A report reached him that the Khan had been slain or dethroned by one of his nobles, and he sent an emissary to the Eastern Mark to discover if the news were true. As no certain information could be gained,² he dismissed the envoy without a letter.

The sublime Khan would wait no longer on the Emperor's pleasure. Policy as well as resentment urged him to take the offensive, for, if he displayed a timid respect towards the Franks, his prestige among the Slavs beyond the Danube was endangered. The power of Bulgaria was asserted by an invasion of Pannonia (A.D. 827). A fleet of boats sailed from the Danube up the Drave, carrying a host of Bulgarians who devastated with fire and sword the Slavs and Avars of Eastern Pannonia. The chiefs of the Slavonic tribes were expelled and Bulgarian governors were set over them.³ Throughout the ninth century the Bulgarians were neighbours of the Franks in these regions, and seem to have held both Sirmium and Singidunum.⁴ We may be sure that Omurtag did not fail to lay a heavy hand on the disloyal Slavs of Dacia.

The operations of Omurtag in this quarter of his empire are slightly illustrated by an incidental memorial, in a stone recording the death of Onegayon. This officer, who was one of the king's "men" and held the post of tarkan, was on his

¹ *Ib.* 168.

² This was early in the year. As late as June nothing certain could be ascertained (*ib.* 170). This illustrates the lack of communications between Bulgaria and the West.

³ *Ib.* 173. The expedition was ap-

parently in summer.

⁴ Cp. Dümmler, *Südöstl. Marken*, 28-29, and *Slawen in Dalm.* 46 sqq.; Schafarik, ii. 176. For Singidunum (Belgrade) cp. Pope John VIII. *Letter to Boris*, Mansi, xvii. 64; *Vita Clementis*, ed. Miklosich, c. 16, p. 22.

way to the Bulgarian camp and was drowned in crossing the river Theiss.¹

A similar memorial, in honour of Okorses, who in proceeding to a scene of war was drowned in the Dnieper,² shows that the arms of Omurtag were also active in the East. The situation in the Pontic regions, where the dominion of the Bulgarians confronted the empire of the Khazars, is at this time veiled in obscurity. The tents of the Magyars extended over the region between the Don and the Dnieper.³ The country to the west was exposed to their raids, and not many years later we shall find their bands in the neighbourhood of the Danube. The effect of the Magyar movement would ultimately be to press back the frontier of Great Bulgaria to the Danube, but they were already pressing the Inner Bulgarians into a small territory north of the Sea of Azov, and thus dividing by an alien and hostile wedge the continuous Bulgarian fringe which had extended along the northern coast of the Euxine. Although the process of the Magyar advance is buried in oblivion, it is not likely that it was not opposed by the resistance of the lords of Pliska, and it is tempting to surmise that the military camp to which the unlucky Okorses was bound when the waters of the Dnieper overwhelmed him was connected with operations against the Magyars.

From the scanty and incidental notices of Omurtag which occur in the Greek and Latin chronicles, we should not have been able to guess the position which his reign takes in the internal history of Bulgaria. But the accidents of time and devastation have spared some of his own records, which reveal him as a great builder. He constructed two new palaces, or palatial fortresses, one on the bank of the Danube, the other at the gates of the Balkans, and both possessed strategic significance. Tutrakan, the ancient Transmarisca (to the east of Rustchuk), marks a point where the Danube, divided here by an island amid-stream, offers a conspicuously convenient passage for an army. Here the Emperor Valens built a bridge of boats, and in the past century the Russians have frequently chosen this place to throw their armies across

¹ *Aboba*, 191 'Ὀνεγαβον . . . [ἀπ]ελθὼν [εἰς] τὸ φουσαῖτον ἐπυλγην εἰς τῇ[ν] Τήσαν τὸν ποταμόν.

² *Ib.* 190 'Ὀκορσῆς ὁ κοπανός.

³ For the Hungarians see below, p. 423 and Appendix XII.

the river.¹ The remains of a Bulgarian fortress of stone and earth, at the neighbouring Kadykei,² probably represent the stronghold which Omurtag built to command the passage of Transmarisca.³ On an inscribed column,⁴ which we may still read in one of the churches of Tyrnovo, whither the pagan monument was transported to serve an architectural use, it is recorded that "the sublime Khan Omurtag, living in his old house (at Pliska), made a house of high renown on the Danube." But the purpose of this inscription is not to celebrate the building of this residence, but to chronicle the construction of a sepulchre which Omurtag raised half-way between his "two glorious houses" and probably destined for his own resting-place. The measurements, which are carefully noted in the inscription, have enabled modern investigators to identify Omurtag's tomb with a large conical mound or kurgan close to the village of Mumdzhilar.⁵ The memorial concludes with a moralising reflexion: "Man dies, even if he live well, and another is born, and let the latest born, considering this writing, remember him who made it. The name of the ruler is Omurtag, Kanas Ubêgê. God grant that he may live a hundred years."

If the glorious house on the Dauube was a defence, in the event of an attack of Slavs or other enemies coming from the north, Omurtag, although he lived at peace with the Roman Empire, thought it well to strengthen himself against his southern neighbours also, in view of future contingencies. The assassination of Leo and the elevation of Michael II., whose policy he could not foresee, may have been a determining motive. At all events it was in the year following this change of dynasty⁶ that Omurtag built a new royal residence and fortress in the mountains, on the river Tutsa,⁷ command-

¹ Cp. *Aboba*, 562.

² Uspenski, *ib.* 552, identifies Kadykei with the Roman Nigrinianae. Under the remains of the Bulgarian fortress there is a stratum of Roman work.

³ The inscription (see next note) gives 40,000 *opyvau* as the distance between the old and the new palace. This (45 kilometres) corresponds to the distance of Pliska from Silistria and from Kadykei. The Bulgarian fortress at the latter place and the

discovery of an official inscription there (*Aboba*, 228) justify the identification of Uspenski. See *ib.* 519, 551-552.

⁴ Printed by Jireček, *Geschichte*, 148; by Uspenski, with improved text, in *O drevn. gor. Tyrnovo*, 5. Jireček's translation is in several points incorrect.

⁵ *Aboba*, 553.

⁶ A.D. 821-822. See inscription translated below.

⁷ Now called the Great Kamchia. It is mentioned by Theophanes (436₂),

ing the pass of Veregava, by which Roman armies had been wont to descend upon Pliska, as well as the adjacent pass of Verbits. We do not know how the new town which the King erected in front of the mountain defiles was called in his own tongue, but the Slavs called it Preslav, "the glorious," a name which seems originally to have been applied to all the palaces of the Bulgarian kings.¹ It is not probable that Omurtag intended to transfer his principal residence from the plain to the hills,² but his new foundation was destined, as Great Preslav, to become within a hundred years the capital of Bulgaria.

The foundation of the city is recorded on a large limestone column which was dug out of the earth a few years ago at Chatalar,³ about four miles from the ruins of Preslav. "The sublime Khan Omurtag is divine ruler in the land where he was born. Abiding in the Plain⁴ of Pliska, he made a palace (aulê) on the Tutsa and displayed his power to the Greeks and Slavs.⁵ And he constructed with skill a bridge over the Tutsa. And he set up in his fortress⁶ four columns, and between the columns he set two bronze lions.⁷ May God grant that the divine ruler may press down the Emperor with his foot so long as the Tutsa flows,⁸ that he may procure

where the texts give εἰσῆλθεν (sc. Constantine V.) εἰς Βουλγαρίαν ἕως τοῦ Τζίκας, but one MS. has Τοῦνζας. In Anna Comnena (7. 3) it is called Βιτζίνα. See *Aboba*, 547.

¹ Preslav corresponds to πάνφημος, the adjective applied to the house on the Danube and to Pliska in the Tyrnovo inscription (τον δυο υκο τον πανφημον, a genitive plural wrongly taken for οἶκον τὸν π. by Jireček; see Bury, App. 10 to Gibbon, vi.). The palace on the Danube is also called ὑπέρφημος (ib.). Cp. τὸ ἀρχαῖστατον ὑπέρφημον and [ὑπέρ] ἄπασαν φήμην in an inscription of Malamir (*Aboba*, 233). This word, like *preslav*, evidently translated a Bulgarian appellative.

² Uspenski thinks that the use of αὐλή in the inscription implies the "transference of the capital" (*Aboba*, 547). But why should not the Khan have two αὐλαί?

³ See *Aboba*, 546 sqq., for the inscription and the circumstance of its discovery. Chatalar is close to the railway station of Preslav-Krumovo.

⁴ εἰς τὴν Πλσκας τον κα(μ)πον. Doubtless κάμπος designates not the whole πεδῖον of Aboba, but the fortified enclosure of Pliska.

⁵ καὶ [. . . .] τὴν δύναμιν τον [ἰς] Γραικοὺς καὶ Σκλάβους. Uspenski supplies ἐπήγε. But Omurtag lived at peace with the Greeks. I would supply ἐδεῖξε (ἐδίξε) or some equivalent, and restore ἰς=εἰς (Uspenski ἐπὶ).

⁶ μετ[ήνεγκεν] καὶ ἐστη[σεν] εἰς αὐτὸ τ[ὸ] κάστ[ρον] (Uspenski). κάστρον, I think, is right, but μετ[ήνεγκεν] very doubtful.

⁷ I read καὶ [μέσ]α [τῶ]ν στύλων. The four columns marked a space in the centre of which were the two lions, or else two columns were on either side of a gateway and the lions between them. Uspenski restores καὶ [εἰς ἐν]α ("and placed two lions on one of the columns"), an arrangement which sounds too inartistic to be credible.

⁸ μὲ τὸν ποτ[έ]δα αὐτοῦ τὸν βασιλέα κά[μψεν] ἕως τρέ[χ]η[ι] ἢ Τοῦτζα. I read κάμψω (the future is required); Uspenski gives κάμπειν. καταβαλεῖν might also be thought of.

many captives for the Bulgarians,¹ and that subduing his foes he may, in joy and happiness, live for a hundred years. The date of the foundation was the Bulgarian year *shegor alem*, or the fifteenth indiction of the Greeks" (A.D. 821-822). In this valuable record of the foundation of Preslav, we may note with interest the hostile reference to the Roman Emperor as the chief and permanent enemy of Bulgaria, although at this time Bulgaria and the Empire were at peace. It was probably a standing formula which had originally been adopted in the reign of some former king, when the two powers were at war.

It has been already related how Omurtag intervened in the civil war between Michael and Thomas, how he defeated the rebel on the field of Kêduktos, and returned laden with spoils (A.D. 823). This was his only expedition into Roman territory; the Thirty Years' Peace was preserved inviolate throughout his reign. The date of his death is uncertain.²

§ 6. *The Reigns of Malamir and Boris*

Omurtag was succeeded by his youngest son Presiam,³ though one at least of his elder sons was still living. Presiam is generally known as Malamir, a Slavonic name which he assumed, perhaps toward the end of his reign. The adoption of this name is a landmark in the gradual process of the assertion of Slavonic influence in the Bulgarian realm. We may surmise that it corresponds to a political situation in which the Khan was driven to rely on the support of his Slavonic subjects against the Bulgarian nobles.

We have some official records of the sublime Khan Malamir,⁴ though not so many or so important as the records

¹ καὶ [δ]όσ[η] αἰχμαλώτους πολλοὺς βουλγάρους. I translate this extremely uncertain restoration of Uspenski, only substituting δόσω, i.e. δώσειν, for his δώση.

² Later than A.D. 827. See above, p. 365. Zlatarski dates the reign as 814-831/2 (see *Aboba*, 236).

³ The evidence, as I hold, points to the identity of Presiam with Malamir; see Appendix X. Enravotas, also called Βολνος (is this Bulgarian *Boian* or Slavonic "warrior"?), was the

eldest son and survived Omurtag, according to the story told by Theophylactus, *op. cit.* 192. See below, p. 382.

⁴ We know that Malamir was ruler of Bulgaria in the reign of Theophilus from Simeon (*Cont. Georg.* 818). The *vers. Slav.* 101 calls him Vladimir, and so the Cod. Par. 854 and Vatic. 1807; the printed texts of *Cont. Georg.*, Leo Gr., and Theod. Mel. have Βαλδύμερ. The error may have arisen from confusion with a later Khan Vladimir, who succeeded Boris,

of his father. We have a memorial column of Tsepa, a boilad and king's liegeman who died of illness.¹ From another stone we learn that Isbules, the kaukhan, who was one of the king's old boilads, built an aqueduct for Malamir at his own expense. This aqueduct was probably to supply one of the royal palaces. Malamir celebrated the occasion by giving a feast to the Bulgarians, and bestowing many gifts upon the boilads and bagains.²

There was some risk that the treaty with the Empire might be denounced during the reign of Theophilus.

The Thracian and Macedonian captives who had been transported by Krum to regions beyond the Danube³ formed a plan to return to their homes. This colony of exiles, who are said to have numbered 12,000 not counting females, were permitted to choose one of their own number as a governor, and Kordyles, who exercised this function, contrived to make his way secretly to Constantinople and persuaded Theophilus to send ships to rescue the exiles and bring them home. This act was evidently a violation of the Thirty Years' Peace, and at the same moment the Bulgarian ruler was engaged in a

and Zlatarski suggests that the narrative was derived by Simeon from a hagiographical work (where such a confusion would not be surprising). But it may be suggested that Simeon or his source wrote Μαλιμέρ; the form of μ in tenth-cent. MSS. was liable to confusion with β, and if the word was read Βαλιμέρ the further corruption was almost inevitable. In any case the identification is certain. Simeon states that "Baldimer" was grandson of Krum, and Malamir was Omurtag's son. In the inscriptions his name is written Μαλαμυρ and Μαλαμυρ. Zlatarski (who distinguishes Presiam from M.) thinks that M. reigned from 831/2 to 836/7; cp. Appendix X.

¹ *Aboba*, 191.

² *Ib.* 230-231. ἀνάβρυτον is the word which I follow Zlatarski and Uspenski in interpreting "aqueduct." The inscription concludes with the prayer that "the divine ruler may live a hundred years along with Isbules the kaukhan."

³ Simeon (*Consl. Georg.* 818; *vers. Slav.* 101-102). The account of the

return of the captives in this chronicle is confused, but has no legendary details and is evidently based upon genuine facts. One difficulty lies in the position of Kordyles. He is described as στρατηλάτης ἐν Μακεδονίᾳ, and he left his son "to govern the Macedonians beyond the Danube" instead of himself. Then, after their failure to escape across Bulgaria, the captives, who are throughout called "the Macedonians," make Kordyles and Tzantzies their leaders. It seems clear that there is a confusion between Macedonia and the "Macedonian" settlement in Bulgaria, and that Kordyles was not stratēgos of Macedonia, but governor of the Macedonian exiles. This is confirmed by the statement that Kordyles had to use a device (μετὰ μηχανῆς τινός) to reach Theophilus; if he had been strat. of Macedonia, this would be inexplicable. We can infer the interesting fact that the captives were established as a colony with a governor of their own, and that as a large number of these were Macedonians, the region which they inhabited was known as Macedonia.

hostile action against the Empire by advancing to Thessalonica. It can hardly be an accident that the date to which our evidence for their transaction points (*c.* A.D. 836) coincides with the termination of the second decad of the Peace, and if it was a condition that the Treaty should be renewed at the end of each decad, it was a natural moment for either ruler to choose for attempting to compass an end to which the other would not agree. We cannot determine precisely the order of events, or understand the particular circumstances in which the captives effected their escape. We are told that the whole population began to cross over a river,¹ in order to reach the place where the Imperial ships awaited them. The Bulgarian Count of the district² crossed over to their side to prevent them, and being defeated with great loss, sought the help of the Magyars, who were now masters of the north coast of the Euxine as far as the Bulgarian frontier. Meanwhile the Greeks crossed, and were about to embark when a host of Magyars appeared and commanded them to surrender all their property. The Greeks defied the predatory foe, defeated them in two engagements, and sailed to Constantiuople, where they were welcomed by the Emperor and dismissed to their various homes.³

We have no evidence as to the object of the expedition to Thessalonica, but it has been conjectured⁴ that the Macedonian Slavs, infected by rebellious movements of the Slavs in Greece,⁵ were in a disturbed state, and that the Bulgarian monarch seized the opportunity to annex to his own kingdom by peaceful means these subjects of the Empire. In support of this guess it may be pointed out that not many years later his power seems to have extended as far west as Ochrida,⁶ and there is no record of a conquest of these regions by arms. And a movement in this direction might also explain the war

¹ *διαπερᾶν*, Simeon (Leo Gr. 232). The chronicler probably meant the Danube (the only river mentioned in the narrative), and if this is right, the captives crossed from the left to the right bank.

² Perhaps the officer who was called the Count of Durostorum (*Δουροστου*). Cp. Uspenski, *Starobolg. nadp.* 230.

³ The approximate date can be inferred from data as to the age of Basil I., who was one of the captives.

The year of his birth is fixed to A.D. 812/3, as he was born in the reign of Michael I. (*Cont. Georg.* 817) and was in swaddling-clothes when his parents were carried off from Hadrianople in A.D. 813 (*Cont. Th.* 216). He was 25 years old when the captives returned (*Cont. Georg.* 819). This gives A.D. 837/8 as the year of escape.

⁴ Zlatarski, *op. cit.* 38.

⁵ See below, p. 379.

⁶ Cp. Zlatarski, 40, and below, p. 334.

which broke out between Bulgaria and Servia in the last years of Theophilus.

About this time the Servians, who had hitherto lived in a loose group of independent tribes, acknowledging the nominal lordship of the Emperor, were united under the rule of Vlastimir into the semblance of a state. If it is true that the extension of Bulgarian authority over the Slavs to the south of Servia was effected at this epoch, we can understand the union of the Servian tribes as due to the instinct of self-defence. Hitherto they had always lived as good neighbours of the Bulgarians, but the annexation of western Macedonia changed the political situation. Vlastimir's policy of consolidating Servia may have been a sufficient motive with Malamir to lose no time in crushing a power which might become a formidable rival, and he determined to subjugate it. But it is not unlikely that the Emperor also played a hand in the game. Disabled from interfering actively by the necessities of the war against the Moslems, he may have reverted to diplomacy and stirred up the Servians, who were nominally his clients, to avert a peril which menaced themselves, by driving the Bulgarians from western Macedonia. The prospect of common action between the Empire and the Servians would explain satisfactorily Malamir's aggression against Servia.¹ The war lasted three years, and ended in failure and disaster for the Bulgarians.²

These speculations concerning the political situation in the Balkan peninsula in the last years of Theophilus depend on the hypothesis, which cannot be proved, that the Bulgarians had succeeded in annexing the Slavonic tribes to the west of Thessalonica. In any case, whatever may have occurred, the Thirty Years' Peace had been confirmed, and remained inviolate till its due termination in A.D. 845-846. It was not renewed, and soon afterwards a Bulgarian army under the general Isbules seems to have invaded Macedonia and operated in the regions of the Strymon and the Nestos;³ while the Imperial

¹ For these conjectures, see Jireček, *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, xxi. 609 sq.; Zlatarski, *op. cit.* 40 sqq. Z. supposes that Theophilus offered the Servians an acknowledgment of their complete independence.

² The source for the war is Con-

stantine, *De adm. imp.* 154; he calls the Bulgarian ruler *Περσίδης*, the only evidence we have for the name. Vlastimir's date is given by Schafarik as A.D. 836-843 (ii. 250).

³ I adopt Zlatarski's interpretation (49 sq.) of the Villoison inscrip-

government retaliated by reinforcing the garrisons of the frontier forts of Thrace in order to carry out a systematic devastation of Thracian Bulgaria.¹ This plan released Macedonia from the enemy; Ishules was recalled to defend his country. The absence of the Thracian and Macedonian troops, which these events imply, is explained, if they were at this time engaged in reducing the Slavs of the Peloponnesus.²

These hostilities seem to have been followed by a truce,³ and soon afterwards Malamir was succeeded by his nephew Boris (c. A.D. 852).⁴ This king, whose reign marks an important epoch in the development of Bulgaria, was soon involved in war with the Servians and with the Croats. He hoped to avenge the defeats which his uncle had suffered in Servia.⁵ But the Servians again proved themselves superior and captured Vladimir, the son of Boris, along with the twelve great bolivads. The Bulgarian king was compelled to submit to terms of peace in order to save the prisoners, and fearing that he might be waylaid on his homeward march he asked for a safe-conduct. He was conducted by two Servian

lion (*C.I.G.* iv. 8691b) found near Philippi. Its obvious meaning is that the Bulgarian king sent Ishules with an army and that he operated in the district of the Smoleanoi, who, we know, lived on the middle course of the Nestos. Cp. Appendix X.

¹ Simeon (*Cont. Georg.* 821). This notice comes immediately after that of the death of Methodius, which occurred in June 847. Zlatarski, 43 sq., has made it quite clear that Simeon refers here to different events from those recorded by Genesios, 85 sq. (see below). He is almost certainly right in referring the important inscription of Shumla (*Aboba*, 233) to operations at this period in Thrace (51 sq.), though otherwise I cannot accept his interpretation (see Appendix X.). The forts of Probaton and Burdizos which are mentioned in it would be two of the *κίστρα* referred to by Simeon, with whose notice the words *υ γρυκυ ερημοσα* (*οι Γρακοι ερημοσαν*) are obviously in accordance.

² There is no independent evidence as to the date of the Peloponnesian war (see below, p. 379).

³ Zlatarski, 53.

⁴ The date of the accession of Boris is determined by Zlatarski, 46-47. He reigned thirty-six years (Theophylactus, *Mart.* 201), his successor Vladimir four years (*ib.* 213). Vladimir was still alive in 892 (*Ann. Fuld.*, s.a.), but was succeeded by Simeon not later than 893. This gives 852-853 for accession of Boris (Golubinski and Jireček had already dated it to 852-856). 852 is rendered probable by the Bulgarian embassy sent to Lewis the German in that year (*Ann. Fuld.*, s.a.), which was probably to announce the accession and confirm the treaty of 845 (*ib.*, s.a.).

⁵ Constantine, *De adm. imp.* 154-155 (Servian war), 150 (Croatian war: unsuccessful and followed by peace). Zlatarski dates these wars to 854-860 (55). Dümmler (*Slaven in Dalm.* 397) conjectures that the Croatian war was successful, and that the Croats ceded Bosnia to Boris. He bases this guess on the apparent fact that about this time the Croatian power seriously declined. He supposes that soon after the conquest, Boris was defeated in his war with the Servians and compelled to surrender Bosnia to them.

princes to the frontier at Rasa, where he repaid their services by ample gifts, and received from them, as a pledge of friendship, two slaves, two falcons, two hounds, and ninety skins.¹ This friendship bore political fruits. The two princes were sons of Muntimir, one of three brothers, who, soon after the Bulgarian invasion, engaged in a struggle for supreme power, and when Muntimir gained the upper hand he sent his rivals to Bulgaria to be detained in the custody of Boris.

During the reign of Boris peace was maintained, notwithstanding occasional menaces,² between Bulgaria and the Empire; and before the end of the reign of Michael III. the two powers were drawn into a new relation, when the king accepted Christian baptism. But the circumstances of this event, which is closely connected with larger issues of European politics, must be reserved for another chapter.

¹ γούνας.

² Genesios, 85-86, says that the Bulgarian ruler (unnamed) threatened to invade Roman territory, but Theodora declared that she would lead an army in person against him. "It will be no glory to you to defeat a woman; if she defeats you, you will be ridiculous." The Bulgarian thought better of his purpose, and remained quiet in his own country. *Cont. Th.* 162 says (1) that the king was Boris (Βόρις), and (2) that he purposed to break the treaty, but renewed it; (3) brings the incident into connexion

with the conversion of the Bulgarians. Zlatarski (54 sq.) accepts the king's name from *Cont. Th.* and gives reasons for dating the incident to A.D. 852. He thinks that this writer has combined the passage in Genesios with another source—the same from which he drew the stories about Theodore Kupharas, the sister of Boris, and the painter Methodios. I doubt whether the anecdote has any value; but it may be based on the circumstance that Boris on his accession renewed the truce with Byzantium.

CHAPTER XII

THE CONVERSION OF THE SLAVS AND BULGARIANS

§ 1. *The Slavs in Greece*

THE ninth century was a critical period in the history of the Slavonic world. If in the year A.D. 800 a political prophet had possessed a map of Europe, such as we can now construct, he might have been tempted to predict that the whole eastern half of the continent, from the Danish peninsula to the Peloponnesus, was destined to form a Slavonic empire, or at least a solid group of Slavonic kingdoms. From the mouth of the Elbe to the Ionian Sea there was a continuous line of Slavonic peoples—the Abodrites, the Wilzi, the Sorbs, the Lusatians, the Bohemians, the Slovenes, the Croatians, and the Slavonic settlements in Macedonia and Greece. Behind them were the Lechs of Poland, the kingdom of Great Moravia, Servia, and the strongly organized kingdom of Bulgaria; while farther in the background were all the tribes which were to form the nucleus of unborn Russia. Thus a vertical line from Denmark to the Adriatic seemed to mark the limit of the Teutonic world, beyond which it might have been deemed impossible that German arms would make any permanent impression on the serried array of Slavs; while in the Balkan peninsula it might have appeared not improbable that the Bulgarian power, which had hitherto proved a formidable antagonist to Byzantium, would expand over Illyricum and Greece, and ultimately drive the Greeks from Constantinople. Such was the horoscope of nations which might plausibly have been drawn from a European chart, and which the history of the next two hundred years was destined to falsify. At

the beginning of the eleventh century the Western Empire of the Germans had extended its power far and irretrievably beyond the Elbe, while the Eastern Empire of the Greeks had trampled the Bulgarian power under foot. And in the meantime the Hungarians had inserted themselves like a wedge between the Slavs of the north and the Slavs of the south. On the other hand, two things had happened which were of great moment for the future of the Slavonic race: the religion of the Greeks and the Teutons had spread among the Slavs, and the kingdom of Russia had been created. The beginnings of both these movements, which were slow and gradual, fall in the period when the Amorian dynasty reigned at New Rome.¹

It was under the auspices of Michael III. that the unruly Slavonic tribes in the Peloponnesus were finally brought under the control of the government, and the credit of their subjugation is probably to be imputed to Theodora and her fellow-regents. The Slavs were diffused all over the peninsula, but the evidence of place-names indicates that their settlements were thickest in Arcadia and Elis, Messenia, Laconia, and Achaia.² In the plains of Elis, on the slopes of Taygetos, and in the great marshlands of the lower Eurotas, they seem almost entirely to have replaced the ancient inhabitants. Somewhere between Sparta and Megalopolis was the great Slavonic town Veligosti, of which no traces remain. Of the tribes we know only the names of the Milings and the Ezerites. The Milings had settled in the secure fastnesses of Taygetos; the Ezerites, or Lake-men, abode in the neighbouring Helos or marshland, from which they took their name.³ Living independently under their own župans, they seized every favourable opportunity of robbery and plunder. In the reign of Nicephorus (A.D. 807) they formed a conspiracy with the Saracens of Africa⁴ to

¹ The introduction of Christianity among the Croats and Servians was of older date.

² See Philippson, i. 3-4; Gregorovius, *Athen*, i. 113 sqq.; G. Meyer, *Aufsätze und Studien* (1885), 140. The place-names still require a thorough-going investigation. Not a few, which have been taken for Slavonic, may be Greek or Albanian. *E.g.* Malevo—the name of Parnon and other mountains—was explained as Slavonic by Fallmerayer and Gregorovius, but it is

undoubtedly Albanian, from *μᾶλλῃ*, "mountain," as Philippson points out (*ib.* 8). Goritsa is often enumerated among the Slavonic names, but it may come from A-goritsa (*ἀγορά*). But there are plenty about which there can be no doubt (such as Krivitsa, Garditsa, Kamcnitsa).

³ *Ezero*, Slavonic for lake.

⁴ The source is Constantine, *De adm. imp.* c. 49. He says that the story was told orally (*ἀγράφως*) during their lifetime by contemporaries to

attack the rich city of Patrae. The stratêgos of the province whose residence was at Corinth, delayed in sending troops to relieve the besieged town, and the citizens suffered from want of food and water. The story of their deliverance is inextricably bound up with a legend of supernatural aid, vouchsafed to them by their patron saint. A scout was sent to a hill, east of the town, anxiously to scan the coast road from Corinth, and if he saw the approach of the troops, to signal to the inhabitants, when he came within sight of the walls, by lowering a flag; while if he kept the flag erect, it would be known that there was no sign of the help which was so impatiently expected. He returned disappointed, with his flag erect, but his horse slipped and the flag was lowered in the rider's fall. The incident was afterwards imputed to the direct interposition of the Deity, who had been moved to resort to this artifice by the intercessions of St. Andrew, the guardian of Patrae. The citizens, meanwhile, seeing the flag fall, and supposing that succour was at hand, immediately opened the gates and fell upon the Saracens and the Slavs. Conspicuous in their ranks rode a great horseman, whose more than human appearance terrified the barbarians. Aided by this champion, who was no other than St. Andrew himself, the Greeks routed the enemy and won great booty and many captives. Two days later the stratêgos arrived, and sent a full report of all the miraculous circumstances to the Emperor, who issued a charter for the Church of St. Andrew, ordaining that the defeated Slavs, their families, and all their belongings should become the property of the Church "inasmuch as the

the younger generation. But the genuine source was the *στυλλὸν* (scal) or charter of Nicephorus, to which he refers, and which was extant in the eleventh century. For it is cited in a Synodal Letter of the Patriarch Nicolaus in the reign of Alexius I.; see Lennclavius, *Jus Graeco-Romanum*, p. 278 (1596), or Migne, *P.G.* 119, 877. Here the occurrence is briefly described, and dated 218 years after the occupation of the Peloponnesus, which the Patriarch connected with the invasion of A.D. 589 (Eragrius, vi. 10). Hence we get the date A.D. 807 for the siege of Patrae (cp. Fallmerayer, *Morea*, i. 185). But the Patriarch speaks of Avars, not of Slavs. Are we

to infer that there was an Avar settlement in the Peloponnesus, that Avars joined the Slavs in the attack, and were mentioned in the Chrysobull of Nicephorus? I drew this inference in a paper on Navarino (*Hermathena*, xxxi. 430 sqq., 1905), connecting it with the interpretation of Avarinos—the original name of Navarino—as an Avar settlement. See also Miller in *Eng. Hist. Review*, 20, 307 sqq (1905). But another possible derivation is from the Slavonic *javorŭ*, "maple," so that the name would mean "maple-wood"; cp. *Ἀβασπῖστρα* in Epirus, *Ἀβασπος* in Phocis: G. Meyer, *Analecta Graeciensia*, 12 (1893).

triumph and the victory were the work of the apostle." A particular duty was imposed upon these Slavs, a duty which hitherto had probably been a burden upon the town. They were obliged to provide and defray the board and entertainment of all Imperial officials who visited Patrae, and also of all foreign ambassadors who halted there on their way to and from Italy and Constantinople. For this purpose they had to maintain in the city a staff of servants and cooks.¹ The Emperor also made the bishopric of Patrae a Metropolis, and submitted to its control the sees of Methone, Lacedaemon, and Korone.² It is possible that he sent military colonists from other parts of the Empire to the Peloponnesus, as well as to the regions of the Strymon and other Slavonic territories,³ and if so, these may have been the Mardaites, whom we find at a later period of the ninth century playing an important part among the naval contingents of the Empire.⁴ We may also conjecture with some probability that this settlement was immediately followed by the separation of the Peloponnesus from Hellas as a separate Theme.⁵

It would be too much to infer from this narrative that the Slavonic communities of Achaia and Elis, which were doubtless concerned in the attack on Patrae, were permanently reduced to submission and orderly life on this occasion, and that the later devastations which vexed the peninsula in the

¹ ἔχοντες ἰδίους καὶ τραπεζοποιὸς καὶ μαγείρους κτλ. The Slavs defrayed the expense ἀπὸ διανομῆς καὶ συνδοσίας τῆς ὁμάδος αὐτῶν. The passage is interesting, as it shows incidentally that, as we should expect, the ordinary route of travel from Italy to Constantinople was by Patrae and Corinth.

² Nicolaus, *Synodal Letter*, cii. *supra*.

³ Theoph. 486 τὰ στρατεύματα πάντη ταπεινώσαι σκεψάμενος Χρυστιανὸς ἀποκίσας ἐκ παντὸς θέματος ἐπὶ τὰς Σκλαυνίας γενέσθαι προσέταξεν (A.D. 809-10); 496 οἱ τὸν Στρυμῶνα οἰκούντες μέτοικοι προφάσει δραξάμενοι ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις φεύγοντες ἐπανάηλθον. (Cp. Hopf, 98, 126.) See next note.

⁴ The western Mardaites (οἱ Μ. τῆς δύσεως) took part in the Cretan expedition of A.D. 902, and numbered with their officers 4087 men (Const. Porph. *Cer.* ii. 44. p. 655). They had fought against the Saracens in Sicily in the reign of Basil I.; *Cont. Th.* 304

τῶν κατὰ Πελοπόννησον στρατιωτῶν καὶ Μαρδαϊτῶν, 311 τῶν κατὰ Πελ. Μαρδαϊτῶν καὶ Ταξαρῶν. As they belonged to the marine establishment, they were probably settled in the coast towns. See Bury, *Naval Policy*, 29, where their settlement in Greece is connected with the later subjugation by Theoktistos, and this seems to me rather more probable.

⁵ See above, p. 224. Michael I. appointed Leo Sklêros stratêgos of Peloponnesus, *Ser. Inc.* 336. We may probably attribute to Leo V. the erection of a watch-tower somewhere in the Peloponnesus, to warn the city of the approach of enemies, doubtless the Saracens, recorded in the inscription (*Corp. Inscr. Gr.* iv. No. 8620):

ἀναξ Λέων ἐστήριξε πύργον ἐνθάδε
λύχνην προφαίνειν τοὺς λόχους τῶν
βαρβάρων.

Cp. Hopf, 105.

reigns of Theophilus and Michael III. were wrought by the Slavs of Laconia and Arcadia. It is more probable that the attack on Patrae was not confined to the inhabitants of a particular district; and that all the Slavs in the peninsula united in another effort to assert their independence before the death of Theophilus. Their rebellion, which meant the resumption of their predatory habits, was not put down till the reign of his son, and we do not know how soon. We may, however, conjecture that it was the Empress Theodora¹ who appointed Theoktistos Bryennios—the first recorded member of a family which was long afterwards to play a notable part in history—to be stratêgos of the Peloponnesian Theme, and placed under his command large detachments from the Themes of Thrace and Macedonia, to put an end to the rapine and brigandage of the barbarians. Theoktistos performed efficiently the work which was entrusted to him. He thoroughly subjugated the Slavs throughout the length and breadth of the land, and reduced them to the condition of provincial subjects.² There were only two tribes with whom he deemed it convenient to make special and extraordinary terms. These were the Milings, perched in places difficult of access on the slopes of Mount Taygetos, and the Ezerites in the south of Laconia. On these he was content to impose a tribute, of 60 nomismata (about £35) on the Milings, and 300 (about £180) on the Ezerites. They paid these annual dues so long at least as Theoktistos was in charge of the province, but afterwards they defied the governors, and a hundred years later their independence was a public scandal.

The reduction of the Peloponnesian Slavs in the reign of Michael prepared the way for their conversion to Christianity and their hellenization.³ The process of civilization and

¹ The sole source is Constantine, *op. cit.* 220-221. The narrative, not suggesting that the revolt lasted long, is in favour of supposing that the Slavs were reduced early in the reign of Theodora and Michael. We cannot go further than this. The date (c. 849) given by Muralet and Hopf (*Geschichte*, 127) rests on the false identification of Theoktistos Bryennios with Theoktistos the Logothete (cp. Hirsch, 220); but there is another consideration which renders the approximate

dating 847-850 plausible; see above, p. 373.

² They retained their lands and customs, but their social organization under župans seems to have come to an end. (Cp. Hopf, 127.) The word župan survives in Modern Greek, *τζουράνις*, in the sense of "herd."

³ The foundation of monasteries and churches was one of the principal means by which the change was effected. The christianization progressed rapidly under Basil I. and his successors.

blending required for its completion four or five centuries, and the rate of progress varied in different parts of the peninsula. The Milings maintained their separate identity longest, perhaps till the eve of the Ottoman conquest; but even in the thirteenth century Slavonic tribes still lived apart from the Greeks and preserved their old customs in the region of Skorta in the mountainous districts of Elis and Arcadia.¹ We may say that by the fifteenth century the Slavs had ceased to be a distinct nationality; they had become part of a new mixed Greek-speaking race, destined to be still further regenerated or corrupted under Turkish rule by the absorption of the Albanians who began to pour into the Peloponnesus in the fourteenth century. That the blending of Slavonic with Greek blood had begun in the ninth century is suggested by the anecdote related of a Peloponnesian magnate, Nicetas Rentakios, whose daughter had the honour of marrying a son of the Emperor Romanus I. He was fond of boasting of his noble Hellenic descent, and drew upon himself the sharp tongue of a distinguished grammarian, who satirized in iambics his Slavonic cast of features.² But the process of hellenization was slow, and in the tenth century the Peloponnesus and northern Greece were still regarded, like Macedonia, as mainly Slavonic.³

¹ See Finlay, iv. 21, 22. It is remarkable that in the Chronicle of Morea it is only in connexion with Slavonic regions that the word *δρόγγος*, "defile," is used: *ὁ δ. τῶν Σκλαβῶν* 4605, *ὁ δ. τοῦ Μελεγγού* 4531, cp. 2993, *ὁ δ. τῶν Σκορτῶν* 5026. But notwithstanding, the etymology is not the Slavonic *dragū*, "wood," as G. Meyer would have it (op. cit. 135); *δρόγγος* is the same word as *δρουγγος*, *drungus*, the Byzantine military term, which is derived from Germanic (Eng. *throng*). See J. Schmitt's ed. of *Chronicle of Morea*, p. 605. There are very few Slavonic words in Modern Greek. Miklosich has counted 129 ("Die slavischen Elemente im Neugriechischen," *S.B. of Vienna Acad.* lxiii., 1869).

² Const. Porph. *Them.* 53 Εὐφήμιον ἐκείνον τὸν περιβήτησαν γραμματικὸν ἀποσκῶσαι εἰς αὐτὸν τοῦτ' αὖ θρυλοῦμενον λαμβεῖν

γαρασδοειδὴς ὄψις ἐσθλαβωμένη—

evidently one verse of an epigram on Nicetas. The meaning of *γαρασδοειδής* is a well-known puzzle. Finlay's proposal, *γαδαροειδής* (from *γαῖδαρος*, an ass), is unlikely, and the explanation of Sathas (see Gregorovius, op. cit. 150), "with the countenance of a Zoroastrian" (*Ζαράσδας*), is extremely far-fetched. I suggested that the Slavonic proper name Gorazd may underlie *γαρασδο* (Gorazd, e.g., was the name of one of the pupils of the apostle Methodius); this would suit the context (*English Historical Review*, vi., Jan. 1891, p. 152).

³ See the tenth-century scholiast on Strabo 7. p. 1251 (ed. Amsterdam, 1707), and, for Elis, 8. p. 1261 (*ἀπαντα γὰρ ταῦτα Σκύθαι νέμονται*). The complicated question of race-blending in Greece requires still a thoroughgoing investigation, as Krumbacher observes

We can designate one part of the Peloponnesus into which the Slavonic element did not penetrate, the border-region between Laconia and Argolis. Here the old population seems to have continued unchanged, and the ancient Doric tongue developed into the Tzakonian dialect, which is still spoken in the modern province of Kynuria.¹

It is interesting to note that on the promontory of Taenaron in Laconia a small Hellenic community survived, little touched by the political and social changes which had transformed the Hellenistic into the Byzantine world. Surrounded by Slavs, these Hellenes lived in the fortress of Maina, and in the days of Theophilus and his son still worshipped the old gods of Greece. But the days of this pagan immunity were numbered; the Olympians were soon to be driven from their last recess. Before the end of the century the Mainotes were baptized.²

§ 2. *The Conversion of Bulgaria*

Christianity had made some progress within the Bulgarian kingdom before the accession of Boris. It is not likely that the Roman natives of Moesia, who had become the subjects of the Bulgarian kings, did much to propagate their faith; but we can hardly doubt that some of the Slavs had been converted, and Christian prisoners of war seem to have improved the season of their captivity by attempting to proselytize their masters. The introduction of Christianity by captives is a phenomenon which meets us in other cases,³ and we are

(B.Z. 10. 368). Meanwhile consult A. Philippson, "Zur Ethnographie des Peloponnes," i. and ii., in *Petermanns Mitteilungen aus Justus Perthes' geographischer Anstalt*, vol. xxxvi., 1890.

¹ The Tzakonian dialect perplexed philologists and was variously taken for Slavonic (Kopitar, Hopf, Philippson) and Albanian (Sathas). But the studies of Deffner (cp. his *Zakonische Grammatik*, 1881) and Thumb ("Die ethnographische Stellung der Zakonen," in *Indogermanische Forschungen*, iv. 195 sqq., 1894) have demonstrated that the Tzakones and their language are Greek. The name

presents difficulties. Thumb holds that the loss of *l* was a rule in the Tzakonian dialect, and suggests the etymology: εἰς Λακωνίαν, ἡ Ἀκωνία(ν), Σακωνία, Τσακωνία (comparing σέρβουλον: τσέρβουλε). The chief town in the Tzakonian district is Leonidi. Its extent is exhibited in the ethnographical map in Philippson, *op. cit.* The Τζέκωνες are mentioned in Constantine, *Cer.* 696.

² In the reign of Basil I. See Constantine, *De adm. imp.* 224; Hopf, 129.

³ *E.g.* the Goths (Wulfilas) and the Iberians.

not surprised to learn that some of the numerous prisoners who were carried away by Krum made efforts to spread their religion among the Bulgarians, not without success. Omurtag was deeply displeased and alarmed when he was informed of these proceedings, and when threats failed to recall the perverts to their ancestral cult, he persecuted both those who had fallen away and those who had corrupted them.¹ Amongst the martyrs was Manuel, the archbishop of Hadrianople.² The most illustrious proselyte is said to have been the eldest son of Omurtag himself,³ who on account of his perversion was put to death by his brother Malamir.

The adoption of Christianity by pagan rulers has generally been prompted by political considerations, and has invariably a political aspect. This was eminently the case in the conversion of Bulgaria. She was entangled in the complexities of a political situation, in which the interests of both the Western and the Eastern Empire were involved. The disturbing fact was the policy of the Franks, which aimed at the extension of their power over the Slavonic states on their south-eastern frontier. Their collision with Bulgaria on the Middle Danube in the reign of Omurtag had been followed by years of peace, and a treaty of alliance was concluded in A.D. 845. The efforts of King Lewis the German were at

¹ Theodore Stud. (*Parva Cat.* lxiii. pp. 220 *sqq.*) relates that the Bulgarian ruler, whose name, unfortunately, he does not mention (and the date of this catechesis is unknown), issued a decree that all Christians should eat meat in Lent on pain of death. Fourteen resisted the order. One was put to death, and his wife and children given as slaves to Bulgarian masters, as an example; but the others held out, and were also executed. The khan has been supposed to be Krum; cf. Auvray's note, p. 647. Theophylact (*Hist. mart.* 192) relates that one of Krum's captives, Kinamon, was assigned to Omurtag, who became greatly attached to him, and tried to induce him to apostatize. As he was obstinate, he was thrown into a foul prison, where he remained till after Omurtag's death.

² *Cont. Th.* 217. According to the *Menologion Basilii*, Pars ii., Jan. 22, Migne, *P.G.* 117, 276, Krum put

Manuel to death, cutting off his arms from his shoulders, then cleaving him in twain with a sword, and throwing the remains to wild beasts. It is added that Krum's act caused such disgust among the Bulgarians that they strangled him with ropes. All this is evidently a sensational and impudent invention. For the persecution of Tsok, see above, p. 359.

³ Theophyl. *op. cit.* 193 *sqq.* Malamir released the captive Kinamon from prison at the request of his brother Enravôtas. Kinamon converted Enravôtas, who was put to death by Malamir as an apostate. Malamir, according to this narrative (197), died three years later; this would give 848-849 for the death of Enravôtas. We have an earlier instance of apostasy on the part of a royal Bulgarian in Telerig, the refugee who accepted baptism at the court of Leo IV. (Theoph. 451).

this time directed to destroying the independence of the Slavonic kingdom of Great Moravia, north of the Carpathians. Prince Rostislav was making a successful stand against the encroachments of his Teutonic neighbours, but he wanted allies sorely and he turned to Bulgaria. He succeeded in engaging the co-operation of Boris, who, though he sent an embassy to Lewis just after his accession, formed an offensive alliance with Rostislav in the following year (A.D. 853). The allies conducted a joint campaign and were defeated.¹ The considerations which impelled Boris to this change of policy are unknown; but it was only temporary. Nine years later he changed front. When Karlmann, who had become governor of the East Mark, revolted against his father Lewis, he was supported by Rostislav, but Boris sided with Lewis, and a new treaty of alliance was negotiated between the German and Bulgarian kings (A.D. 862).²

Moravia had need of help against the combination of Bulgaria with her German foe, and Rostislav sent an embassy to the court of Byzantium. It must have been the purpose of the ambassadors to convince the Emperor of the dangers with which the whole Illyrian peninsula was menaced by the Bulgaro-German alliance, and to induce him to attack Bulgaria.³

The Byzantine government must have known much more than we of the nature of the negotiations between Boris and Lewis. In particular, we have no information as to the price which the German offered the Bulgarian for his active assistance in suppressing the rebellion. But we have clear evidence that the question of the conversion of Bulgaria to Christianity was touched upon in the negotiations.⁴ As a means of increasing his political influence at the Bulgarian court, this matter was of great importance to Lewis, and Boris did not decline to entertain the proposition. The interests of the Eastern Empire were directly involved. Bulgaria was a standing danger; but that danger would be seriously enhanced if she passed under the ecclesiastical supremacy of Rome and threw in her lot with Latin Christianity. It was a matter of supreme urgency to detach Boris from his connexion with Lewis, and the representatives

¹ *Ann. Bert.*, s.a.

² Zlatarski, 61.

³ Cp. Zlatarski, 59.

⁴ Cp. *Ann. Bert.*, s.a. 864; Zlatarski, 60.

of Rostislav may have helped Michael and his advisers to realize the full gravity of the situation. It was decided to coerce the Bulgarians, and in the summer of A.D. 863 Michael marched into their territory at the head of his army, while his fleet appeared off their coast on the Black Sea.¹ The moment was favourable. Bulgarian forces were absent, taking part in the campaign against Karlmann, and the country was suffering from a cruel famine. In these circumstances, the Emperor accomplished his purpose without striking a blow; the demonstration of his power sufficed to induce Boris to submit to his conditions. It was arranged that Bulgaria should receive Christianity from the Greeks and become ecclesiastically dependent on Constantinople;² that Boris should withdraw from the offensive alliance with Lewis and only conclude a treaty of peace.³ In return for this alteration of his policy, the Emperor agreed to some territorial concessions. He surrendered to Bulgaria a district which was uninhabited and formed a march between the two realms, extending from the Iron Gate, a pass in the Stranja-Dagh, northward to Develtos.⁴ It has been supposed that at the same time the frontier in the far west was also regulated, and that the results of the Bulgarian advance towards the Hadriatic were formally recognized.⁵

The brilliant victory which was gained over the Saracens

¹ The meaning of this expedition has been first satisfactorily explained by Zlatarski, 62 sqq. The source is Simeon (*Cont. Georg.* 824).

² The consent to accept Christianity was perhaps unexpected. Photius, *Ep.* 4, p. 168 *eis tēn tōn xristianōn paradōxēs meteneκεντρίσθησαν πιστιν.*

³ This treaty was maintained for many years to come.

⁴ *Cont. Theoph.* 165 δέδωκεν ἐρήμην οὖσαν τηριακὰ τὴν ἀπὸ Σιδηρᾶς, ταύτης δὲ τότε ὄριον τυγχανούσης Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ αὐτῶν ἄχρι τῆς Δεβέλτου, ἥτις οὕτω καλεῖται Ζάγορα παρ' αὐτοῖς (ἐρήμη is the antecedent of ἥτις). The credit of having explained this passage belongs to Zlatarski, *op. cit.* 65 sqq. Hitherto Σιδηρᾶ had been explained of the so-named Balkan pass (Veregava, see above, p. 339, n. 2), but the district stretching from the Balkans to Develtos was already Bulgarian. Zlatarski has seen that Σιδηρᾶ marks

the southern point of the region in question, and identifies it with a pass called Demir Kapu, "Iron Gate," in the north-western hills of the Stranja-Planina, north of Losen-grad, which is near Kovehat. He places the western point of the surrendered district at the Sakar Planina. The other region, between the Eastern Balkans and the Erkesiia, was also called Zagora (= "behind the mountains").

⁵ Zlatarski, 70 sqq. Ochrida and Glavinitsa were Bulgarian in the reign of Boris (*Vita Clementis*, c. 17, p. 24, ed. Miklosich: Kephallenia = Glavinitsa). Zlatarski carefully discusses the whereabouts of this place and concludes that (distinct from the region of Cape Glossa, on the bay of Avlonia, which was called Glavinitsa) there was an inland fortress Glavinitsa, between the rivers Voiusa (ancient Aous) and Ozunu (ancient Apsus), near Mount Tomor; and he would

in the autumn of the same year at Poson was calculated to confirm the Bulgarians in their change of policy,¹ and in the course of the winter the details of the treaty were arranged. The envoys whom Boris sent to Constantinople were baptized there;² this was a pledge of the loyal intentions of their master. When the peace was finally concluded (A.D. 864-5), the king himself received baptism.³ The Emperor acted as his sponsor, and the royal proselyte adopted the name of Michael. The infant Church of Bulgaria was included in the see of Constantinople.⁴

Popular and ecclesiastical interest turned rather to the personal side of the conversion of the Bulgarian monarch than to its political aspects, and the opportunity was not lost of inventing edifying tales. According to one story, Boris became acquainted with the elements of Christian doctrine by conversations with a captive monk, Theodore Kupharas. The Empress Theodora offered him a ransom for this monk, and then restored to him his sister who had been led captive by the Greeks and honourably detained in the Imperial palace at Constantinople, where she had embraced the Christian faith. When she returned to her country she laboured incessantly to convert her brother. He remained loyal to his own religion until Bulgaria was visited by a terrible famine, and then he was moved to appeal to the God whom Theodore Kupharas and his own sister had urged him to worship.⁵ There are

define the western frontier of Bulgaria, in the reign of Boris, as drawn from Lake Ostrovo south-west by Kastoria, taking in Mount Grammos, reaching the middle course of the Voiusa, then turning north, reaching the Ozum and following its tributary the Devol, crossing the Skumbi west of Elhasam, thence northward to the Black Drin, which it followed to the Servian frontier. The reader will find these places on any good modern map of the Balkan peninsula (e.g. in the *Times Atlas*, Maps 69-70).

¹ Cp. Gen. 97.

² Zlatarski, 80 sq.

³ In Bulgaria (*ib.*). Cp. Gen. *ib.*, *Cont. Th.* 163.

⁴ The narrative fixes 864 as the earliest date for the baptism of Boris. There is other evidence. Photius, writing in A.D. 867 (*Ep.* 4. p. 168) and

speaking of the Latin priests sent from Rome towards the end of A.D. 866, remarks that the Bulgarians at that time had been Christians for less than two years (*οὐδ' ἐπὶ δύο ἐνιαυτοῖς*). This gives the date as A.D. 864-865. For A.D. 865 see my *Chronological Cycle*, p. 142, where I point out that the Bulgarian date for the baptism, given in the *Poshieslovie* of Tudor (*apud* Kalaidovich, *Ioannes Exarch*, p. 98), is to be explained as *tokh vechem*, which, on my interpretation of the chronological system, = A.D. 865. The date A.M. 6377 = A.D. 869 is given in *Vita S. Clementis*, c. 4. p. 7, for the "call" (*κλήσις*) of the Bulgarians.

⁵ *Cont. Th.* 162-163. The captivity of a sister of Boris seems highly improbable, but it is of course quite possible that he had a sister who was a convert.

two points of interest in this tale. It reflects the element of feminine influence, which is said to have played a part in the conversions of many barbarian chiefs, and which, for all we know, may have co-operated in shaping the decision of Boris; and it represents the famine, which prevailed in Bulgaria at the time of Michael's invasion, as a divine visitation designed to lead that country to the true religion.¹ Another tale, which bears on the face of it a monkish origin, is of a more sensational kind.² Boris was passionately addicted to hunting, and he desired to feast his eyes upon the scenes of the chase during those nocturnal hours of leisure in which he could not indulge in his favourite pursuit. He sent for a Greek monk, Methodius by name, who practised the art of painting, but instead of commanding him to execute pictures of hunting as he had intended, the king was suddenly moved by a divine impulse to give him different directions. "I do not want you to depict," he said, "the slaughter of men in battle, or of animals in the hunting-field; paint anything you like that will strike terror into the hearts of those that gaze upon it." Methodius could imagine nothing more terrible than the second coming of God, and he painted a scene of the Last Judgment, exhibiting the righteous receiving their rewards, and the wicked ignominiously dismissed to their everlasting punishment. In consequence of the terror produced by this spectacle, Boris received instruction in Christian doctrine and was secretly baptized at night.

In changing his superstition, Boris had to reckon with his people, and the situation tested his strength as a king.³ He forced his subjects to submit to the rite of baptism,⁴ and his policy led to a rebellion. The nobles, incensed at his apostasy, stirred up the people to slay him, and all the Bulgarians of the ten districts of the kingdom gathered round

¹ *Cont. Th.* 163-164. Methodius the painter has sometimes been confounded with Methodius the apostle of the Slavs.

² It is probable enough that the famine also had its psychological influence. Cp. *Ann. Bert.* 85, "Deo . . . signis atque afflictionibus in populo regni sui mouente."

³ The sources for the rebellion are (1) Nicolaus, *Responsa*, 17; (2) *Ann.*

Bert. (i.e. Hincmar) A.D. 866, p. 85, which gives the details; and (3) the brief notice in *Cont. Th.* 164. In the latter there is nothing miraculous, but in the words οὗς καὶ μετὰ τινῶν δολίγων καταπολεμήσας it agrees with the general drift of Hincmar.

⁴ Nicolaus, *Responsa*, *ib.* "postquam baptisati fuere." In *Cont. Th.* the baptism seems to follow the suppression of the revolt.

his palace, perhaps at Pliska. We cannot tell how he succeeded in suppressing this formidable revolt, for the rest of the story, as it reached the ears of Bishop Hincmar of Reims, is of a miraculous nature. Boris had only forty-eight devoted followers, who like himself were Christians. Invoking the name of Christ,¹ he issued from his palace against the menacing multitude, and as the gates opened seven clergy, each with a lighted taper in his hand, suddenly appeared and walked in front of the royal procession. Then the rebellious crowd was affected with a strange illusion. They fancied that the palace was on fire and was about to fall on their heads, and that the horses of the king and his followers were walking erect on their hind feet and kicking them with their fore feet. Subdued by mortal terror, they could neither flee nor prepare to strike; they fell prostrate on the ground. When we are told that the king put to death fifty-two nobles, who were the active leaders of the insurrection, and spared all the rest, we are back in the region of sober facts. But Boris not only put to death the magnates who had conspired against his life; he also destroyed all their children.² This precaution against future conspiracies of sons thirsting to avenge their fathers has also a political significance as a blow struck at the dominant race, and must be taken in connexion with the gradual transformation of the Bulgarian into a Slavonic kingdom.³

Greek clergy now poured into Bulgaria to baptize and teach the people and to organize the Church. The Patriarch Photius indited a long letter to his "illustrious and well-beloved son," Michael, the Archon of Bulgaria, whom he calls the "fair jewel of his labours."⁴ In the polished style which could only be appreciated and perhaps understood by the well-trained ears of those who had enjoyed the privilege of higher education, the Patriarch sets forth the foundations of the Christian faith. Having cited the text of the creed of Nicaea

¹ So Hincmar; according to *Cont. Th.* he carried a cross on his breast.

² Nicolaus, *Responsa*, *ib.* "omnes primates eorum atque maiores cum omni prole sua."

³ So Uspenski (*Aboba*, 105).

⁴ Ὁ καλὸν ἀγαθὸν τῶν ἐμῶν πόνων, *Ep.* 9. p. 204. From this and other

similar expressions, Valettas (p. 202, note) hastily infers that Photius personally converted Boris. But it is not likely either that Boris came to Constantinople or that Photius went to Bulgaria. The Patriarch was doubtless active in bringing about the conversion.

and Constantinople, he proceeds to give a brief, but too long, history of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, in order to secure his new convert against the various pitfalls of heresy which lie so close to the narrow path of orthodox belief. The second part of the letter is devoted to ethical precepts and admonitions. Having attempted to deduce the universal principles of morality from the two commandments, to love God and thy neighbour as thyself, Photius traces the portrait of the ideal prince. Isocrates had delineated a similar portrait for the instruction of Nicocles, prince of Cyprus, and Photius has blended the judicious counsels of the Athenian teacher with the wisdom of Solomon's Proverbs and Jesus the son of Sirach.¹ The philosophical reader observes with interest that it is not Christian but pre-Christian works to which the Patriarch resorts for his practical morality. Seldom has such a lecture been addressed to the patient ears of a barbarian convert, and we should be curious to know what ideas it conveyed to the Bulgarian king, when it was interpreted in Bulgarian or Slavonic. The theological essay of the Patriarch can hardly have simplified for the minds of Boris and his subjects those abstruse metaphysical tenets of faith which the Christian is required to profess, and the lofty ideal of conduct, which he delineated, assuredly did not help them to solve the practical difficulties of adjusting their native customs to the demands of their new religion.

Not only Greek priests, but Armenians and others, busied themselves in spreading their faith, and the natives were puzzled by the discrepancies of their teaching.² A grave scandal was caused when it was discovered that a Greek who baptized many was not really a priest, and the unfortunate man was condemned by the indignant barbarians to lose his ears and nose, to be beaten with cruel stripes, and driven from the country which he had deceived.³ A year's experience of the missionaries by whom his dominion was inundated may probably have disappointed Boris. Perhaps he would not have broken with Byzantium if it had not become evident

¹ This has been shown by Valettas in his notes. There are many resemblances between the precepts of Photius and the Admonitions (*Παράκλησις*) of Basil I. to his son Leo VI.

² Nic. *Resp.* 106. Snopce (*Konst. Cyr.* 17) states that the Armenian mentioned here were Paulicians. This seems highly probable.

³ *Ib.* 14.

that the Patriarch was determined to keep the new Church in close dependence on himself, and was reluctant to appoint a bishop for Bulgaria. But it is evident that Boris felt at the moment able to defy the Imperial government. The strained relations which existed between Rome and Constantinople suggested the probability that the Pope might easily be induced to interfere, and that under his authority the Bulgarian Church might be organized in a manner more agreeable to the king's views. Accordingly he despatched ambassadors to Rome who appeared before Pope Nicolas (August A.D. 866), asked him to send a bishop and priests to their country,¹ and submitted to him one hundred and six questions as to the social and religious obligations which their new faith imposed upon their countrymen. They also presented to him, along with other gifts, the arms which the king had worn when he triumphed over his unbelieving adversaries.² Boris at the same time sent an embassy to King Lewis, begging him to send a bishop and priests.³ The Pope selected Paul, bishop of Populonia, and Formosus, bishop of Porto, as his legates, to introduce the Roman rites in Bulgaria, and add a new province to his spiritual empire. He provided them with the necessary ecclesiastical books and paraphernalia, and he sent by their hands a full reply in writing to the numerous questions, trivial or important, on which the Bulgarians had consulted him.

This papal document is marked by the caution and moderation which have generally characterized the policy of the ablest Popes when they have not been quite sure of their ground. It is evident that Nicolas was anxious not to lay too heavy a yoke upon the converts, and it is interesting to notice what he permits and what he forbids. He insists on the observance of the fasts of the Church, on abstinence from

¹ *Ann. Bert.* 86; for the date, *Vil. Nicol. pap.* 156. The names of the Bulgarian envoys were Peter, a relative of Boris, John, and Martin; Mansi, xvii. 128 (in a letter of Pope John viii.).

² *Ann. Bert. ib.* King Lewis, when he heard of this, bade the Pope send the arms, etc. to him.

³ *Id.* Lewis asked his brother the Emperor Charles to send him vessels,

vestments, and books for the use of the Bulgarian Church; "unde Karolus ab episcopis regni sui non parvam summam accipiens misit ei ad dirigendum regi" (I have inserted *misit*, which seems indispensable). Lewis sent a bishop with priests and deacons, but finding that the bishops sent by the Pope were already actively engaged in baptizing, they immediately returned: *Ann. Fuld.* 380 (A.D. 867).

work on holy days, on the prohibition of marriages within the forbidden degrees. Besides these taboos, he lays down that it is unlawful to enter a church with a turban on the head,¹ and that no food may be tasted before nine o'clock in the morning. On the other hand, he discountenances some taboos which the Greek priests had sought to impose, that it is unlawful to bathe on Wednesdays and Fridays, and to eat the flesh of an animal that has been killed by a eunuch. But he rules that it is not allowable to taste an animal which has been hunted by a Christian if it has been killed by a pagan, or killed by a Christian if it has been hunted by a pagan. The Bulgarians had inquired whether they should adopt the habit of wearing drawers; he replied that it was a matter of no importance. It was the custom for their king to eat in solitary grandeur, not even his wife was permitted to sit beside him. The Pope observes that this is bad manners and that Jesus Christ did not disdain to eat with publicans and sinners, but candidly affirms that it is not wrong nor irreligious. He bids them substitute the cross for the horse's tail which was their military standard. He strictly prohibits the practice of pagan superstitions, the use of healing charms, and swearing by the sword. He commands them to discontinue the singing of songs and taking of auguries before battle, and exhorts them to prepare for combat by reciting prayers, opening prisons, liberating slaves, and bestowing alms. He condemns the superstition of *sortes biblicae* to which the Greeks resorted.²

A pleasing feature of the Pope's Responses is his solicitude to humanize the Bulgarians by advising them to mitigate their punishments in dealing with offenders. He sternly denounces, and supports his denunciation by the argument of common sense, the use of torture for extracting confessions from accused persons.³ He condemns the measures which had been taken to destroy the rebels and their families as severe and unjust,⁴ and censures the punishment which had been inflicted on the Greek who had masqueraded as a priest. He enjoins the right of asylum in churches, and lays down that even parricides and fratricides who seek the refuge of the sanctuary should be treated with mildness. But in the eyes of the medieval

¹ Nic. Resp. 66 (cum ligatura lintei).

² *Ib.* 77.

³ *Ib.* 86.

⁴ See above, p. 387.

Christian, murder, which the unenlightened sense of antiquity regarded as the gravest criminal offence, was a more pardonable transgression than the monstrous sin of possessing two wives. "The crime of homicide," the Pope asserts, "the crime of Cain against Abel, could be wiped out in the ninth generation by the flood; but the heinous sin of adultery perpetrated by Lamech could not be atoned for till the seventy-seventh generation by the blood of Christ."¹ The Bulgarians are commanded, not indeed, as we might expect, to put the bigamist to death, but to compel him to repudiate the unfortunate woman who had the later claim upon his protection and to perform the penance imposed by the priest.

The treatment of unbelievers was one of the more pressing questions which Nicolas was asked to decide, and his ruling on this point has some interest for the theory of religious persecution. A distinction is drawn between the case of pagans who worship idols and refuse to accept the new faith, and the case of apostates who have embraced or promised to embrace it, but have slidden back into infidelity. No personal violence is to be offered to the former, no direct compulsion is to be applied, because conversion must be voluntary; but they are to be excluded from the society of Christians. In the case of a backslider, persuasive means should first be employed to recall him to the faith; but if the attempts of the Church fail to reform him, it is the duty of the secular power to crush him. "For if Christian governments did not exert themselves against persons of this kind, how could they render to God an account of their rule; for it is the function of Christian kings to preserve the Church their mother in peace and undiminished. We read that King Nebuchadnezzar decreed, when the three children were delivered from the flames, 'Whosoever shall blaspheme the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall perish, and their houses shall be destroyed.' If a barbarian king could be so wroth at blasphemy against the God of Israel because *he* could deliver three children from temporal fire, how much greater wrath should be felt by Christian kings at the denial and mockery of Christ who can deliver the whole world, with the kings themselves, from everlasting fire. Those who are convicted of lying or infidelity to kings are seldom if

¹ Nic. Resp. 51.

ever allowed to escape alive; how great should be the royal anger when men deny, and do not keep their promised faith to, Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Be zealous with the zeal of God." Thus was the principle of the Inquisition laid down by Rome for the benefit of Bulgaria.

In the eyes of Boris the most important question submitted to the Pope was the appointment of a Patriarch. On this point Nicolas declined to commit himself. He said that he could not decide until he had heard the report of his legates; but he promised that in any case Bulgaria should have a bishop, and when a certain number of churches had been built, an archbishop, if not a Patriarch. The prospect of an archbishopric seems to have satisfied the king. He welcomed the papal legates and, expelling all other missionaries from the kingdom, committed to them exclusively the task of preaching and baptizing.¹ Formosus succeeded so well in ingratiating himself, that Boris destined him for the future archbishopric; but the Pope declined to spare him from his Italian see, and sent out other bishops and priests, promising to consecrate as archbishop whichever of them the king should select.

The Latin ecclesiastics worked for more than a year (A.D. 866-867) in the land which the Pope hoped he had annexed to the spiritual dominion of Rome.² Bulgaria, however, was not destined to belong to the Latin Church; her fate was linked in the religious as in the political sphere to Constantinople. But the defeat of papal hopes and the triumph of Byzantine diplomacy transcend the limits of the present volume.

§ 3. *The Slavonic Apostles*

The Slavonic land of Moravia, which extended into the modern Hungary as far eastward as the river Gran, was split into small principalities, the rivalries of whose lords invited the interference of the Franks. The margraves of the East Mark looked on the country as a client state; the archbishops of Passau considered it as within their spiritual jurisdiction; and German ecclesiastics worked here and there in the land, though Christian theology had penetrated but little into the

¹ *Vit. Nic. pap.* 157.

² For the denunciation of their prac-

tices by Photius, see above, Chap. VI. p. 200.

wilds, and only by an abuse of terms could Moravia be described as Christian.¹ The Moravian Slavs chafed under a dependency which their own divisions had helped to bring about, and we have seen how Rostislav, a prince who owed his ascendancy in the land to the support of King Lewis the German, sent an embassy to Constantinople.

Ecclesiastical tradition affirms that his envoys, who arrived at the court of Michael III. in A.D. 862-863,² requested the Emperor to send to Moravia a teacher who knew Slavonic and could instruct the inhabitants in the Christian faith and explain the Scriptures. "Christian teachers have been amongst us already, from Italy, Greece, and Germany, teaching us contradictory doctrines; but we are simple Slavs and we want some one to teach us the whole truth."³

We may confidently reject this account of the matter as a legend. The truth probably is that, when the Moravian embassy arrived, the Patriarch Photius saw an opportunity of extending the influence of the Greek Church among the Slavs, and incidentally of counteracting, in a new field, the forms of Western Christianity which he so ardently detested. The suggestion may have come to him from his friend Constantine the Philosopher, a man of Thessalonica, who had a remarkable gift for languages and was a master of that Slavonic tongue which was spoken in the regions around his birthplace.

There is not the least reason to suppose that the family of Constantine (more familiarly known under his later name of Cyril) was not Greek.⁴ His elder brother, Methodius, had entered the public service, had held the post of governor of some region where there were Slavonic settlements,⁵ and had then retired to a monastery on Mt. Olympus in Bithynia. Constantine (born about A.D. 827)⁶ had been devoted to

¹ At the Synod of Mainz in A.D. 852 we hear of the "rudis adhuc christianitas gentis Marahensium: *M.G.H. (Leg.)* i. 414. Cp. Jagić, *Entstehungsgeschichte*, i. 7.

² A.D. 860 or 861, acc. to Jagić, *Entstehungsgeschichte*, i. 6. As Constantine probably did not go to Moravia till A.D. 864 (see below, p. 396), it seems more likely that the embassy arrived in 863 or at earliest 862. So too Bretholz, *Geschichte Mährens*, 66. See

above, p. 383, for its real object.

³ *Vit. Meth.* c. 5; cp. *Translatio*, c. 7, "qui ad legendum eos et ad perfectam legem ipsam edoceat."

⁴ Jireček's attempt to claim the apostles as Slavs (*Geschichte*, 151) is unconvincing.

⁵ *Vit. Meth.* c. 3, držati slověnsko, principatum Slovenicum.

⁶ When he died (A.D. 869, February 14) he was 42 years old (*Vit. Const.* c. 18).

learning from his youth. Legend said that at the age of seven years he had chosen, in a dream, Wisdom as his bride. The promise of his boyhood excited the interest of the statesman Theoktistos, who fetched him to Constantinople to complete his education. He pursued his studies under two eminent men of learning, Leo¹ and Photius. But he disappointed the hopes of his patron, who destined him for a secular career and offered him the hand of his god-daughter, a wealthy heiress. He took orders and acted for some time as librarian of the Patriarch's library, a post which, when Photius was Patriarch, could not have been filled by one who was not exceptionally proficient in learning. But Constantine soon buried himself in a cloister,² which he was with difficulty persuaded to leave, in order to occupy what may be described as an official chair of philosophy at Constantinople.³ His biographer says that he was chosen by the Emperor to hold a disputation with Saracen theologians on the doctrine of the Trinity.⁴ Subsequently he retired to live with his brother on Mount Olympus. He was in this retreat when envoys from the Chagan of the Khazars arrived at Constantinople and asked the Emperor to send him a learned man to explain the tenets of Christianity, so that the Khazars might judge between it and two other faiths, Judaism and Mohammanadism, which were competing for their acceptance. Michael, by the advice of Photius, entrusted the mission to Constantine, who, accompanied by Imperial envoys, travelled to Cherson with the embassy of the Khazars.⁵ At Cherson he remained some months to learn the Khazar language,⁶ and to seek for the body of St. Clement, the first bishop of Rome, who had suffered martyrdom in the neighbourhood. But St. Clement was a name almost forgotten by the natives, or rather the

¹ See below, p. 436.

² On the *Stenon*, i.e. the Bosphorus (*Vit. Const.* c. 4).

³ See below, p. 439. His friendship with Photius did not deter him from entering into a speculative controversy with the learned Patriarch, who had written a treatise to maintain the rash doctrine that two souls inhabited the human body. Anastasius, *Praef.* 6, "fortissimo eius amico."

⁴ Cp. Appendix XI. The date, if the story were true, would be A.D. 851,

since, according to the source, *Vit. Const.* 6, he was aged 24. The author of this life describes the debate at length.

⁵ Cp. below, p. 423. The source for the discovery of the body of St. Clement is the *Translatio* of Gauderic, cp. Appendix XI.

⁶ *Translatio*, c. 2. In *Vit. Const.* c. 8 he is represented as studying Hebrew and Samaritan at Cherson—Hebrew evidently for the purpose of disputing with the Jews.

strangers,¹ who inhabited Cherson; the church near which his coffin had been placed on the seashore was fallen into decay; and the coffin itself had disappeared in the waves. But it was revealed to the Philosopher where he should search, and under miraculous guidance, accompanied by the metropolitan and clergy of Cherson, he sailed to an island, where diligent excavation was at length rewarded by the appearance of a human rib "shining like a star." The skull and then all the other parts of what they took to be the martyr's sacred body were gradually dug out, and the very anchor with which he had been flung into the sea was discovered. Constantine wrote a short history of the finding of the relics, in which he modestly minimized his own share in the discovery; and to celebrate the memory of the martyr he composed a hymn and a panegyrical discourse. Of his missionary work among the Khazars nothing more is stated² than that he converted a small number and found much favour with the Chagan, who showed his satisfaction by releasing two hundred Christian captives.

In this account of Constantine's career the actual facts have been transmuted and distorted, partly by legendary instinct, partly by deliberate invention. We need not hesitate to accept as authentic some of the incidents which have no direct bearing on his titles to fame, and which the following generation had no interest in misrepresenting. The date of his birth, for instance, the patronage accorded to him by the Logothete (Theoktistos), the circumstances that he taught philosophy and acted as librarian of the Patriarch, there is no reason to doubt.³ His visit to the Khazars for missionary purposes is an undoubted fact, and even the panegyrical tradition does not veil its failure, though it contrives to preserve his credit; but the assertion that he was sent in response to a

¹ *Translatio, ib.*, "ut pote non indigenae, sed diversis ex gentibus advenae."

² *Vit. Const.* cc. 9, 10, 11, relates at length disputations at the court of the Khazars. Cp. Pastrenek, *Dějiny sl. Ap.* 58 sq., and see below, Appendix XI.

³ These facts, known to Methodius, could have been handed down by him

to his disciples, one of whom was probably the author of *Vit. Const.* The chronological order, of course, need not be accurate. For instance, it is natural to conjecture that the learned Constantine, whom we know otherwise to have been intimate with Photius, was Patriarchal librarian under him, i.e. not earlier than A.D. 859. The narrative in *Vit. Const.* would certainly imply an earlier date.

request of the Chagan is of one piece with the similar assertion in regard to his subsequent mission to Moravia. His discovery of the body of St. Clement is a myth,¹ but underlying it is the fact that he brought back to Constantinople from Cherson what he and all the world supposed to be relics of the Roman saint.

The visit to the Khazars may probably be placed in the neighbourhood of A.D. 860,² and it was not long after Constantine's return to Constantinople that the arrival of the Moravian envoys suggested the idea of a new sphere of activity. We are quite in the dark as to how the arrangements were made, but it was at all events decided that Constantine and his brother Methodius should undertake the task of propagating Christianity in Moravia. They set out not later than in the summer of A.D. 864.³

According to the naïve story, which, as we have seen, represents Rostislav as begging for teachers, Constantine accomplished, in the short interval between the embassy and his departure, what was no less than a miracle. He invented a new script and translated one of the Gospels or compiled a Lectionary⁴ in the Slavonic tongue. If we consider what this means we shall hardly be prepared to believe it. The alphabet

¹ Anastasius believed in it, but he heard it from Metrophanes, bishop of Smyrna. Constantine himself, whom he knew personally (at Rome in A.D. 868), declined to say how the relics had been obtained (*Ep. ad Gaudericum*, apud Pastrnek, 247: "quae praedictus philosophus fugiens arrogantiae notam referre non passus est"). This admission enables us to judge the story. Cp. Franko, *Beiträge*, 236. Franko, in this article, points out that there was another legend which relates the discovery of St. Clement to the reign of Nicephorus I. (231 sqq.).

² If we assume that he was a librarian of Photius and that he held this office before the Khazar mission (as the *Vit. Const.* states). We have a certain confirmation of this in the probability that he could hardly have undertaken the mission until he was in priest's orders. As 30 was the minimum age (*Conc. Trull.* can. 14), and he was born in 827, he could not have been ordained priest before 857.

³ According to *Vit. Const.* c. 15,

they remained 40 months in Moravia; according to *Vit. Meth.* c. 6, 3 years. (*The Translatio*, c. 7, gives 4½ years, but there may be an error through confusion of iii. with iv.). They left probably before the end of A.D. 867; see below.

⁴ Jagić, *op. cit.* i. 17, who thinks that Constantine's work as a translator consisted of (besides the Lectionary) liturgical books containing psalms and prayers. These books may have been begun before his arrival in Moravia, but the evidence of the old Glagolitic Psalter (ed. by Geitler in 1883) points to the conclusion that some of the Psalms were translated in Moravia (*ib.* ii. 51). For the consultation of the Latin text (likely in Moravia, highly improbable at Constantinople) is evident in several passages, e.g. *Ps.* 118, 130, ἡ δόξα σου τῶν λόγων σου φωτεῖ καὶ συνετεῖ νηπίους where the Slavonic *razum dat* for *sveteit* is obviously influenced by the Latin *intellectum dat*.

of the early Slavonic books that were used by Constantine and his brother in Moravia was a difficult script, derived from Greek minuscule characters, so modified that the origin can only be detected by careful study. It would have been impossible to invent, and compose books in, this Glagolitic writing, as it is called, in a year. It has been suggested that the Macedonian Slavs already possessed an alphabet which they employed for the needs of daily life, and that what Constantine did was to revise this script and complete it, for the more accurate rendering of the sounds of Slavonic speech, by some additional symbols which he adapted from Hebrew or Samaritan.¹ His work would then have been similar to that of Wulfilas, who adapted the Runic alphabet already in use among the Goths and augmented it by new signs for his literary purpose. But we have no evidence of earlier Slavonic writing; and the Glagolitic forms give the impression that they were not the result of an evolution, but were an artificial invention, for which the artist took Greek minuscules as his guide, but deliberately set himself to disguise the origin of the new characters.

It must have been obvious to Constantine that the Greek signs themselves without any change, supplemented by a few additional symbols, were an incomparably more convenient and practical instrument. And, as a matter of fact, his name is popularly associated with the script which ultimately superseded the Glagolitic. The Cyrillic script, used to this day by the Bulgarians, Servians, and Russians, is simply the Greek uncial alphabet, absolutely undisguised, expanded by some necessary additions. That tradition is wrong in connecting it with Cyril, it is impossible to affirm or deny; it is certain only that he used Glagolitic for the purpose of his mission to Moravia and that for a century after his death Glagolitic remained in possession. To expend labour in manufacturing such symbols as the Glagolitic and to use them for the purpose of educating a barbarous folk, when the simple Greek forms were ready to his hand, argues a perversity which would be incredible if it had not some powerful motive. It has been pointed out that such a motive existed.² In order to obtain a footing in Moravia, it was necessary to proceed with the

¹ Cp. Jagić, *op. cit.* ii. 28.

² Brückner, 219 sq.

utmost caution. There could be no question there, in the existing situation, of an open conflict with Rome or of falling foul of the German priests who were already in the country. Rostislav would never have acquiesced in an ecclesiastical quarrel which would have increased the difficulties of his own position. The object of Photius and Constantine, to win Moravia ultimately from Rome and attach her to Byzantium, could only be accomplished by a gradual process of insinuation. It would be fatal to the success of the enterprise to alarm the Latin Church at the outset, and nothing would have alarmed it more than the introduction of books written in the Greek alphabet. Glagolitic solved the problem. It could profess to be a purely Slavonic script, and could defy the most suspicious eye of a Latin bishop to detect anything Greek in its features. It had the further advantage of attracting the Slavs, as a proper and peculiar alphabet of their own.

But the important fact remains that the invention of Glagolitic and the compilation of Glagolitic books required a longer time than the short interval between the Moravian embassy and the departure of the two apostles. There is no ground for supposing, and it is in itself highly improbable, that the idea of a mission to that distant country had been conceived before the arrival of Rostislav's envoys. Moreover, if the alphabet and books had been expressly designed for Moravian use, it is hard to understand why Constantine should have decided to offer his converts a literature written in a different speech from their own. He translated the Scripture into the dialect of Macedonian Slavonic, which was entirely different from the Slovák tongue spoken in Moravia.¹ It is true that the Macedonian was the only dialect which he knew, and it was comparatively easy for the Moravians to learn its peculiarities; but if it was the needs of the Moravian mission that provoked Constantine's literary services to Slavonic, the natural procedure for a missionary was to learn the speech of the people whom he undertook to teach, and then prepare books for them in their own language.

The logical conclusion from these considerations is that

¹ Cp. Jagić, *op. cit.* i. 9-11. Slovák belongs to the Bohemian group of Slavonic languages.

tho Glagolitic characters were devised, and a Slavonic ecclesiastical literature begun, not for the sake of Moravia, but for a people much nearer to Byzantium. The Christianization of Bulgaria was an idea which must have been present to Emperors and Patriarchs for years before it was carried out, and Constantine must have entertained the conviction that the reception of his religion by the Bulgarian Slavs would be facilitated by procuring for them Scripture and Liturgy in their own tongue and in an alphabet which was not Greek. That he had some reason for this belief is shown by the resistance which Glagolitic offered in Bulgaria to the Greek (Cyrillic) alphabet in the tenth century. The Slavs of Bulgaria spoke the same tongue as the Slavs of Macedonia, and it was for them, in the first instance, that the new literature was intended. The Moravian opportunity unexpectedly intervened, and what was intended for the Slavs of the south was tried upon the Slavs beyond the Carpathians—*experimentum in corpore vili*.

"If Constantine had been really concerned for the interests of the Moravians themselves, he would have written for them in their own language, not in that of Salonika, and in the Latin, not in an artificially barbarous or Greek, alphabet."¹ But he was playing the game of ecclesiastical policy; Photius was behind him; and the interest of the Moravian adventure was to hoodwink and out-manceuvre Rome.

The adventure was a failure so far as Moravia itself was concerned. It brought no triumph or prestige to the Church of Constantinople, and the famous names of Constantine and Methodius do not even once occur in the annals of the Greek historians.

The two apostles taught together for more than three years in Moravia, and seem to have been well treated by the prince. But probably before the end of A.D. 867 they returned to Constantinople,² and in the following year proceeded to

¹ Brückner (219), with whose views in the main points I agree, though I do not go so far as to reject the embassy of Rostislav.

² *Vit. Meth.* c. 5, "reversi sunt ambo ex Moravia." This statement, inconsistent with other sources which describe their journey to Rome through Pannonia and by Venice, is obviously

right; for Constantine brought the relics of Clement to Rome, and it is not to be supposed that he would have taken, or been allowed to take, them to Moravia from Constantinople. Their arrival in Rome was probably in 868; the *post quem* limit is Dec. 14, 867; see next note.

Rome. Pope Nicolas, hearing of their activity in Moravia, and deeming it imperative to inquire into the matter, had addressed to them an apostolic letter, couched in friendly terms and summoning them to Rome. They had doubtless discovered for themselves that their position would be soon impossible unless they came to terms with the Pope. The accession of Basil and the deposition of Photius changed the situation. A Patriarch who was under obligations to the Roman See was now enthroned, and Constantine and Methodius, coming from Constantinople and bearing as a gift the relics of St. Clement, could be sure of a favourable reception. They found that a new Pope had succeeded to the pontifical chair.¹ Hadrian II., attended by all the Roman clergy, went forth at the head of the people to welcome the bearers of the martyr's relics, which, it is superfluous to observe, worked many miracles and cures.

The Pope seems to have approved generally of the work which Constantine had inaugurated. Methodius and three of the Moravian disciples were ordained priests;² but Moravia was not made a bishopric and still remained formally dependent on the See of Passau. Hadrian seems also to have expressed a qualified approval of the Slavonic books. The opponents of the Greek brethren urged that there were only three sacred tongues, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, appealing to the superscription on the Cross. The Pope is said to have rejected this "Pilatic" dogma in its extreme form, and to have authorized preaching and the reading of the Scriptures in Slavonic; but he certainly did not, as was afterwards alleged, license the singing of the service of the Mass in the strange tongue, even though it were also chanted in Latin,³ nor did he cause the Slavonic liturgy to be recited in the principal churches of Rome.⁴

At this time, the most learned man at Rome was the librarian Anastasius, who knew Greek, kept himself in contact with the Greek world, and translated into Latin the Chronicle

¹ Nicolas died A.D. 867, Nov. 13, Hadrian succeeded Dec. 14.

² *Vit. Meth.* c. 6. The addition to the *Translatio* (c. 9 *ad fin.*) states that both Constantine and Methodius were consecrated bishops, and this is accepted by Snopce, *op. cit.* 126 *sqq.*

Methodius became bishop of Pannonia at a later period (*Vit. Meth.* c. 8 *ad fin.*).

³ See the spurious letter of Hadrian in *Vit. Meth.* c. 8.

⁴ *Vit. Const.* c. 17.

of Theophanes. He made the acquaintance of Constantine, of whose character and learning he entertained a profound admiration. Writing at a later time to the Western Emperor, Anastasius mentions that Constantine knew by heart the works of Dionysios the Areopagite and recommended them as a powerful weapon for combating heresies.¹ But the days of Constantine the Philosopher were numbered. He fell ill and was tonsured as a monk, assuming the name of Cyril. He died on February 14, A.D. 869,² and his body was entombed near the altar in the church which had been newly erected in honour of St. Clement.³

The subsequent career of Methodius in Moravia and Pannonia lies outside our subject. He was in an untenable position, and the forces against him were strong. He was determined to celebrate mass in Slavonic, yet he depended on the goodwill of the Roman See. His disciples, soon after their master's death, were compelled to leave the country, and they found a more promising field of work in Bulgaria, the land for which, as we have seen reason to think, Cyril's literary labours were originally intended.

¹ *Ep. ad Car.*, apud Ginzel, *Anhang*, p. 44. Anastasius is mentioned in *Vit. Const.* c. 17—one of the details which show that the writer (who also knew that Constantine's disciples were consecrated by bishops Formosus and Gauderic) had some good information.

² *Vit. Const.* c. 18; *Translatio*, c. 10.

³ It was built by Gauderic, bishop of Velletri, who was interested in St. Clement, to whom the Church of Velletri was dedicated (Anastasius, *Ep. ad Gaudericum*). On old frescoes

discovered close to the place where Constantine was buried, representing the translation of the saint's relics into the church, the inscription ACIRIL occurs (apparently referring to their discovery and restoration by Cyril). Rossi dates the frescoes to the tenth century. See *Bullettino di archeologia cristiana*, i. 9 sqq., 1863; ii. 1 sqq., 1864; and G. Wilpert, *Le pitture della basilica primitiva di San Clemente* (1906). Cp. Pastrenek, *op. cit.* 91.